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by M. HEERMA VAN VOSS, E. J. SHARPE, R. J. Z. WERBLOWSKY

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EDITORS' PAGE

The present number of *NUMEN*, although appearing formally under the name of the new Editorial Board (see *NUMEN*, vol. xxiv, 1977, p. 162) is, at least to some extent, still the work of the previous Editor-in-Chief, Prof. C. J. Bleeker. Several articles had been accepted for publication and had, in fact, already reached the proof stage, when it appeared that for reasons of space they would have to be held over for 1978. To the three articles "inherited" from the outgoing Editor-in-Chief, the Editorial Board has seen fit to add the text of a talk delivered by Prof. Bleeker in Marburg in April 1977. Though a *causerie* combining reminiscences and reflections rather than a research-paper, Prof. Bleeker's talk, whilst ostensibly dealing with Heiler, also says a lot about Prof. Bleeker himself. The Editorial Board is pleased to be able to honour the outgoing Editor-in-Chief by publishing a contribution in which his own role of a kind of *trait-d'union* between the fathers of modern *Religionswissenschaft* (Rudolf Otto) and the present state of our subject finds eloquent expression.

The present issue also introduces some of the new features on which the Editorial Board of *NUMEN* have decided: bookreviews, calendars and chronicles of events (congresses, conferences, colloquia, symposia) of interest to students of religion, announcing the dates and venues of such as are planned and reporting on such as have taken place. In order to render our "Calendar" and "Chronicle" sections more complete and useful, the Editors request the secretaries of national groups of the IAHR and the conveners of conferences and colloquia to send their announcements viz. reports to *NUMEN* for publication.

THE EDITORS

DIE BEDEUTUNG DER RELIGIONSGESCHICHTLICHEN
UND RELIGIONSPHÄNOMENOLOGISCHEN FORSCHUNG
FRIEDRICH HEILERS *

Vor ungefähr 55 Jahren besuchte ich als Student der Universität Leiden zum ersten Mal Marburg an der Lahn. Im Verlauf von wenigen Wochen hatte ich mein Herz an diese malerische Stadt und die liebliche hessische Landschaft verloren. Ein guter Studienkamerad von mir und ich bekamen jeder ein bescheidenes Stipendium genehmigt, um an einer Auslandsuniversität etwas neue akademische Luft einzutauen, wie man in Leiden zu sagen pflegte. Die Wahl war durchaus nicht schwierig. Es bestand nämlich eine Verbindung zwischen der Marburger theologischen Fakultät und der von Leiden. Die Schriften berühmter Marburger Gelehrten waren in Leiden keine unbekannten. Wir studierten die *Ethik* van Herrmann und lasen zu unserer Erbauung sein *Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott*. Rudolf Otto's berühmtes Buch *Das Heilige* hinterließ tiefen Eindruck. Mit Erstaunen und Bewunderung hatten wir Kenntnis genommen von Heilers umfangreichem Werk über *Das Gebet*. Es war vor allem Otto, der ausländische Studenten rings um sich versammelte: Engländer, Amerikaner, Holländer und sogar einen Studenten aus Britisch-Indien. Sie saßen bei seinen Vorlesungen auf der vordersten Reihe und bildeten zeitweise einen internationalen Club, der fröhliche Wanderungen in Marburgs Umgebung unternahm. Natürlich besuchte man auch Heilers Kollegs. Überdies erinnere ich mich an einen "offenen Abend" im Hause dieses jungen, brillanten Gelehrten und seiner jungen Frau, wo diskutiert, musiziert und gesungen wurde. Es war sehr schön. Später bin ich noch mehrere Male wieder nach Marburg zurückgekommen. Nachdem ich in Amsterdam zum Hochschullehrer berufen worden war und als "Secretary General" eine leitende Position in der "International Association for the History of Religions" erhalten hatte, lernte ich Heiler persönlich näher kennen und habe mit ihm, vor allem während der Zeit der Vorbereitung für den religions-

* Vortrag, gehalten auf der Akademischen Gedenkfeier des Fachbereiches Evangelische Theologie der Philipps-Universität, Marburg am 28/4/1977, dem 10. Todestag Friedrich Heilers.

historischen Kongreß in dieser Stadt im Jahr 1960, eng zusammen gewirkt. Aber der erste Besuch bleibt mir unvergänglich.

Als junger Student hätte ich mir in meinen kühnsten Träumen nicht vorstellen können, daß mir noch einmal die Ehre zufallen würde, auf Einladung des "Fachbereichs der Evangelischen Theologie der Philipps-Universität" zum 10. Todestag von Professor Dr. Friedrich Heiler eine Gedenkrede über diesen einmalig begabten Gelehrten zu halten. Ohne zu zögern habe ich die Einladung angenommen. Doch war ich mir sogleich bewußt, daß ich damit eine schwere Aufgabe übernahm. Denn es ist menschlich und wissenschaftlich unmöglich, in einer kurzen Rede den vielen Verdiensten eines Gelehrten von Heilers wissenschaftlichen Fähigkeiten und seiner internationalen Berühmtheit völlig gerecht zu werden.

Ideologische, praktische und sogar ästhetische Überlegungen haben mich nun zu dem Entschluß gebracht, meinem Vortrag die Form eines Torsos zu geben. Denn erstens einmal war Heiler ein produktiver Autor. Dr. J. Waardenburg bietet in dem zweiten Teil seiner *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion* eine Liste von 36 Studien, zum Teil sehr umfangreicher, zum Teil in der Form von Broschüren, die auf den Namen Heiler lauten. Es bedarf keiner Erklärung, daß niemand den Gedankenreichtum so vieler Schriften in der Redezzeit von 45 Minuten in den Griff kriegen kann. Man muß sich notgedrungen darauf beschränken einige Hauptlinien festzulegen. Zweitens weist Heilers wissenschaftliche Produktion die Eigenart auf, daß seine religionswissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen aufs Engste verwoben sind mit seinen religiösen, kirchlichen und theologischen Anliegen. Diese Arbeitsweise ist charakteristisch für seinen Blick auf die Verbindung von Religionswissenschaft und kirchlich-religiösem Leben. Dieser Punkt kommt gleich noch einmal zur Sprache. Vorläufig stelle ich fest, daß ein Torso übrig bleibt, wenn man Heilers rein religionswissenschaftliche Untersuchungen aus seinem Gesamtwerk herausschält, ein Tun, das übrigens mit Vorsicht und viel Takt geschehen muß. Drittens verlangt mein Auftrag, daß Heilers Werk in den Rahmen der heutigen Religionswissenschaft gestellt wird, damit die "Bedeutung" seines "Einsatzes" deutlich wird. Auch in dieser Hinsicht ist Beschränkung geboten. Der Aufbau dieser Rede läßt nur Raum für einige flüchtige Hinweise. Nun ist ein Torso sowohl ästhetisch als auch ideologisch ein reizvolles Gebilde. Niemand würde es

wagen, den Torso einer griechischen Plastik vollenden zu wollen. In sich selbst besitzt er eine höchste Schönheit. Außerdem prägt der Torso dem Menschen die Wahrheit ein, daß man weder im Leben, noch in der Wissenschaft die Vollendung erreicht. All unser Sich-Abmühen, all unser Studieren und Publizieren ist Stückwerk. Und so ist auch das Bild von Heilers wissenschaftlicher Arbeit, das ich zu bieten habe. Gern gebe ich meinen Hörern die Freiheit, ihre Phantasie um diesen Torso spielen zu lassen. Zweifellos werden meine Worte bei denen, die Heiler gekannt haben, wie mit einem Zauberschlag Erinnerungen erstehen lassen, die ihnen teuer sind.

Die Einteilung dieses Referates liegt auf der Hand. Zuerst will ich ein paar Worte Heilers Person widmen. Dann folgt eine Globalübersicht über sein Werk. Zum Schluß will ich mich an eine Beurteilung der Bedeutung seines Schaffens wagen.

Es wird öfters gesagt, daß es besser sei, wenn man den Verfasser berühmter Bücher nicht persönlich kenne, denn das erspare die Enttäuschung darüber, daß der Charakter oder die Lebensweise des betroffenen Autors keineswegs im Einklang stehe mit den erhabenen Gedanken, die er in seinem Buch oder in seinen Gedichten niedergelegt hat. Bei Heiler ist diese Gefahr nicht vorhanden. Der Gelehrte, der die Entrückungen der Mystik auf mitreißende Art zu beschreiben wußte, schien, wenn man ihn kennenlernte, eine etwas introvertierte Persönlichkeit zu sein, von der Friede und Heiterkeit ausstrahlten. Bei Heiler sind Person und Werk untrennbar. Will man die Bedeutung seiner Studien nach ihrem Wert bemessen, dann muß man ein Bild seiner Persönlichkeit besitzen. Nun werde ich mich bestimmt davor hüten, eine Strukturanalyse seines Wesens zu entwerfen. Man kann keinen Menschen völlig ergründen. Das gilt in ganz besonderem Maß von einer genialen Persönlichkeit wie Heiler. Doch ist es in diesem Zusammenhang wichtig, die Aufmerksamkeit auf einige Eigenarten seiner geistigen Fähigkeiten zu lenken. Aus seinen Werken kann man ablesen, daß er in ausnehmender Weise begabt war, eine phantastische Arbeitskraft besaß und über ein fehlerfreies Gedächtnis verfügte. Das Tempo in dem er, vor allem in seinen jüngeren Jahren, gearbeitet hat, ist unglaublich. Die Tatsachen, d.h. die Jahreszahlen, berichten das. 1911 begann er in München als Student. Nach dem Studium von Theologie und Philosophie widmete er sich dem Erlernen von einer Reihe von Sprachen, nämlich: Sumerisch, Akkadisch, Ara-

bisch, Syrisch, Armenisch, Hettitisch, Ägyptisch, Koptisch, Chinesisch, Sanskrit, Páli und Avestisch. Natürlich erwartet niemand, daß er die Finessen dieser Sprachen ergründen konnte, an sich ist diese Liste aber schon so eindrucksvoll, daß man mit dem Franzosen sagt: "excusez du peu". In der Eröffnungssitzung des Kongresses von 1960 in Marburg glänzte er mit seiner Sprachenkenntnis, als er die ausländischen Gäste in Englisch, Französisch, Italienisch, Schwedisch, Neugriechisch und mit Hilfe von Professor Hoffmann sogar in Japanisch begrüßte. Nun noch eine Jahreszahl. 1917 promovierte er mit *Das Gebet*. Wer dieses Standartwerk in der dritten Auflage 575 Seiten stark, zur Hand nimmt und sorgfältig durchliest, fragt sich mit stummer Verwunderung, wie ein junger Gelehrter von 25/26 Jahren damit fertig wurde, sein gewaltig umfangreiches Material zu sammeln, zu sichten und in eine wohl ausgewogene Form zu gießen. Das ist fast religionshistorische Teufelskunst. Und dazu kommt noch, daß er 1918 eine "religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung" über *Die buddhistische Versenkung* schrieb, ein Werkchen von bescheidenem Umfang von 46 Seiten, das aber gekennzeichnet ist durch ein ganz besonderes Eindringen in den Gegenstand. Die zweite Auflage von 1922 ist 100 Seiten stark. Dank seiner schnellen Auffassung und seines einwandfreien Gedächtnisses konnte Heiler in kurzer Zeit eine kolossale Faktenkenntnis erwerben. Ich möchte hier nur ein paar willkürlich ausgesuchte Beispiele geben. In *Urkirche und Ostkirche* (1937) fügte er dem Titel des Paragraphen über "Das Mönchtum" eine Anmerkung hinzu über die Geschichte der Askese des Mönchtums, die 55 Sätze lang ist und eine ausgebreitete Literatur über dieses Thema bietet. In demselben Werk kommt auf Seite 477 das bei der Firmung gebrauchte Salböl, das Myron, zur Sprache. Ein vollkommen neben-sächlicher Punkt. Eine Anmerkung von 31 Sätzen verschafft jede gewünschte Auskunft über dieses Myron. Ein Außenstehender meint nach diesen Mitteilungen vielleicht, daß Heilers Werke wegen des Aufwands an Gelehrsamkeit nicht zu lesen seien. Das Gegenteil ist wahr. Heiler war ein großartiger Stilist. Seine Sprache fließt in einem schnellen Tempo, hat oft ein musikalisches und lyrisches timbre und bekommt manchmal sogar so etwas wie einen extatischen Klang, wenn es sich um die Mystik handelt. Alles, was er schrieb, ist wohlkomponiert. Man liest manche Teile wie einen Roman. Er besaß die Gabe, verwickelte Probleme in einfachen Sätzen durchsichtig zu machen.

Wie und wann leistete er dies alles? Das fragte man sich wenn man ihn traf. Alle Hast schien ihm dann fremd zu sein. In Gesellschaft saß er meistens schweigend und freundlich lächelnd da. Dieses Lächeln ließ mich immer denken an das Lächeln der wunderschönen Buddhabilder im ethnologischen Museum zu Leiden, die ich einmal so beschrieb: "Ein Buddha-Bild weckt bei andächtiger Betrachtung die Vermutung, daß sich dahinter eine großartige und zugleich rätselhafte Gedankenwelt verbirgt. Die unbewegliche Gestalt . . . mit ihrem hehren, undurchdringlichen Antlitz . . . drückt eine Aristokratie des Geistes aus, die nicht nachlassen kann, Eindruck zu erwecken." Wo waren Heilers Gedanken, wenn er — ein wenig lächelnd — lauschte? Wer vermag das zu sagen? Vermutlich tauchten blitzschnell neue Wahrheiteinsichten in ihm auf, oder er entwarf neue Abhandlungen.

Punkt zwei: Heilers Beitrag zum Studium der Religionsgeschichte und der Religionsphänomenologie. Diese Fächer sind schwer zu unterscheiden und zu trennen. Im Prinzip macht der Religionshistoriker vertikale Einschnitte in das ausgedehnte Material der religiösen Erscheinungen dadurch, daß er einzelne Religionen oder Unterteile von ihnen untersucht. Der Religionsphänomenologe nimmt horizontale Durchschnitte vor, denn er nimmt bestimmte Grundvorstellungen der Religion unter die Lupe. Aber das Verhältnis ist kompliziert, weil Religionsphänomenologie nicht nur ein Fach ist mit einem Inhalt, sondern auch eine Methode, nämlich der Grundsatz einer vorurteilslosen Betrachtung der Gegebenheiten, ein Grundsatz, der zugleich auch für die Religionsgeschichte gilt. Auch bei Heiler sind die beiden Genres nicht haarscharf zu trennen. Zugleich entsteht die Frage, ob er sich immer getreu an das phänomenologische Prinzip gehalten hat. Nun folgt in loser Folge eine Besprechung von Werken mit einer ausgesprochen religionsgeschichtlichen Allüre, dann von solchen mit einem mehr religionsphänomenologischen Charakter.

Es ist üblich, daß der Religionshistoriker sich in erster Linie mit dem Studium der nicht-christlichen Religionen befaßt. Infolge von seiner kirchlichen Herkunft und gedrängt durch seine persönliche Glaubensproblematik hat Heiler es sich ganz besonders zur Aufgabe gestellt, das Christentum religionsgeschichtlich zu durchleuchten. Ein imposantes Resultat dieses Strebens ist *Der Katholizismus*. Wenn gleich dieses Werk, wie er selbst bekennt, herausgewachsen ist aus "einem stark affektiven persönlichen Erlebnis", so trägt es doch alle Kenn-

zeichen einer echten religionsgeschichtlichen Studie, nicht nur wegen der exakten Darbietung des in Überfülle vorhandenen Materials, sondern auch durch das Pathos der Wahrheitsliebe, das dieses Buch durchglüht.

Die Entstehung dieses Buches darf ich als bekannt voraussetzen. 1919 hielt Heiler in Uppsala über dieses Thema einige Vorträge in der Form eines persönlichen Zeugnisses. Die deutsche Übersetzung weckte heftige Aufregung. Und dann geschah etwas, das meines Erachtens typisch ist für Heiler. Dieser sanfte Mann war nämlich ein geharnischter Streiter, wenn es um die Wahrheit ging. Er warf nun sein kolossales Wissen in die Wagschale, um sachlich zu beweisen, daß er den Katholizismus vollständig durchforscht hatte. So entstand ein Buch, das religionshistorische Bedeutung besitzt. Wenn man nämlich den ersten "Hauptteil" über "Das Werden des Katholizismus im Spiegelbild seiner Genien" überschlägt und das Schlußkapitel, das Elemente von einem persönlichen Urteil enthält, wegläßt, so hat man in dem zweiten "Hauptteil" ein Juwel religionsgeschichtlicher und religionsphänomenologischer Strukturanalyse der "Grundelemente des Katholizismus". Nach Heiler sind es sieben: 1) Die primitive Religion (behandelt unter den Titeln "Die Volksfrömmigkeit" und "Die primitiven Elemente im katholischen Kult und in der katholischen Kultdogmatik"), 2) Die Religion des Gesetzesdienstes und der verdienstlichen Werke, 3) Die juridisch-politische Kircheninstitution, 4) Die rationale Theologie, 5) Die Mysterienliturgie, 6) Das asketisch-mystische Vollkommenheitsideal, 7) Evangelisches Christentum im Katholizismus. Man kann sich fragen, ob dieses Bild noch eine vollständige Übereinstimmung mit dem heutigen Katholizismus aufweist und ob es nicht bestimmte Änderungen nötig habe. Doch die Hauptlinien können sicher vor jeder Kritik bestehen.

Es ist interessant, gleich auf dieses mächtige Werk die Broschüre folgen zu lassen, die "Luthers religionsgeschichtlicher Bedeutung" gewidmet ist. Diese Schrift stammt aus dem Jahr 1918. Heiler weiss gründlich Bescheid über die Luther-Literatur. Gewappnet mit dieser Kenntnis gelingt es ihm, ein deutliches Bild zu entwerfen von Luthers origineller Glaubensauffassung. Gegenüber der mittelalterlichen Glaubensmystik stellte Luther den Glauben dar als eine "lebendige Zuversicht auf Gottes Gnade". Durch den Grundsatz von der *sola fides* erneuerte er die "biblische Religiosität". In Übereinstimmung damit erkannte er Gottes Offenbarung in der Geschichte, und das Wort

Gottes war für ihn die höchste Autorität. Entscheidend ist, "was Christum treibt". Diese Richtschnur bestimmt das Verhältnis zu Sünde und Heil, zur Ethik, zur Welt und den Mitgeschöpfen.

Das Problem des Vergleiches zwischen dem römischen Katholizismus und dem Protestantismus hat Heiler ständig beschäftigt, wie u.a. aus seiner Studie *Katholischer und Evangelischer Gottesdienst* von 1921 ersichtlich wird. Er entwirft darin ein sympathisches Bild von der katholischen Messe, die den Frommen zu der Höhe mystischer Anbetung führen kann. Danach charakterisiert er den evangelischen Gottesdienst als "Gemeindegottesdienst", als "persönlichen Gottesdienst", als "Wortgottesdienst" und als "Gebetsgottesdienst". Der tiefste Unterschied zwischen diesen beiden Typen des Gottesdienstes ist die Gottesauffassung, mit seinen eigenen Worten formuliert: "Im katholischen Gottesdienst ist Gottes lebendige Gegenwart gebunden an ein sinnenfälliges Kultobjekt, an die Hostie; der evangelische Gottesdienst ist geistig-persönlicher Gottesdienst: darum tritt in ihm das Sakrament hinter dem Wort stark zurück".

Das zweite große Werk, das in diesem Zusammenhang zur Sprache gebracht werden muß, ist *Urkirche und Ostkirche*. Ich denke nicht daran, den Inhalt dieses beeindruckenden Buches wiederzugeben. Statt dessen wollen wir die Scheinwerfer unseres Interesses auf drei Charakteristica dieser Studie lenken. Der erste Punkt betrifft die Methode: in seinem Vorwort unterstreicht Heiler nochmals, daß er stets streng historisch-kritisch zu Werke geht, so daß er ein offenes Auge hat für kirchliche Mißstände, nicht nur für die der römisch-katholischen Kirche. Zum anderen kann man nur staunen über die grenzenlose Gelehrsamkeit, mit der er die vielen Kirchen des östlichen Christentums bis in ihre kleinsten Besonderheiten zu beschreiben weiß. So verläuft z.B. die Darlegung der "getrennten Nationalkirchen" hauptsächlich nach dem Schema: Geschichte, Verfassung, Glaubenslehre, Sakramentslehre und -spendung, Liturgie, Mönchtum, Schlußcharakteristik. Drittens macht er kein Geheimnis daraus, daß der Glaube an seinen Lieblingsgedanken von der "evangelischen Katholizität" unerschütterlich ist.

Um den Radius von Heilers religionswissenschaftlichem Interesse zu bestimmen, nenne ich als Übergang zu der Behandlung von mehr religionsphänomenologischen Studien zwei Bücher, die Personen gewidmet sind. Das erste ist die Schrift über *Alfred Loisy der Vater des*

katholischen Modernismus. Mit Loisy fühlte sich Heiler sichtlich verwandt und doch: wie groß waren die Unterschiede in Temperament und Lebenslauf! Gerade deshalb konnte er diesen einsamen Gelehrten objektiv-sachlich und zugleich mit liebevollem Verstehen schildern. Das zweite Buch: über das Aufsehen erregende Auftreten von Sâdhu Sundar Singh, seinerzeit von vielen verehrt, von anderen geschmäht, war schon viel geschrieben, als Heiler zur Feder griff, um Leben und Predigt dieses "Apostel des Ostens und Westens", wie er ihn nannte, in das Licht historischer Wahrheit zu setzen. Er tat dies mit einer verblüffenden Sachkenntnis und unter Heranziehung neuer Gegebenheiten. Der Sâdhu bleibt eine mysteriöse Gestalt. Das beste Buch aber über ihn ist zweifellos Heilers Monographie.

Die Religionsphänomenologie kann zwei Arten von Studien umfassen: 1) die Monographie über eine konstitutive Idee der Religion, 2) das Handbuch über die Religion in ihren Erscheinungsformen. Heiler hat uns Spezialarbeiten von beiden Typen geschenkt.

Das Gebet ist ein klassisches Beispiel von Werken aus der ersten Kategorie. Heiler entpuppte sich bereits diesem ersten großen Werk als ein geschickter Typologe. Das ist dann auch der Grund, weshalb man dieses Buch gern bei Gelegenheit zu Rat zieht. Nachdem man die Einleitung, in der die Prinzipien niedergelegt sind, gelesen hat, entdeckt man sofort, daß Heiler große Sympathie hegte für "das naive Beten des primitiven Menschen." Er läßt ein Bild von den schriftlosen Völkern entstehen, dat stark abweicht von den Betrachtungen, die inspiriert sind durch Lévy-Bruhls Theorie über "la mentalité primitive". Die primitiven Menschen, die Heiler vorstellt, während sie beten, benennen ihre Götter mit dem Vaternamen. Heiler konstatiert: "Das Verhältnis des betenden Menschen zu Gott als Kindesverhältnis zum Vater ist ein religiöses Urphänomen" (S. 141). In den Hymnen der antiken Völker vermag er die Klänge des Gebetes herauszuhören, sei es auch in einer stilisierten Form. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit schenkt er dem "Gebet in der hellenischen Vollkultur". Zurecht, denn daraus spricht ein echtes religiöses Pathos. Interessant finde ich das Kapitel über "Gebetskritik und Gebetsideale des philosophischen Denkens", weil das so aktuell ist. Danach nähert man sich beim Lesen dem Herzen dieses Buches, nämlich dem "Gebet in der individuellen Frömmigkeit der großen religiösen Persönlichkeiten". Der *cardo questionis* ist die Polarität von mystischem und prophetischen Gebet. Über das

allen bekannte Thema brauche ich mich nicht weiter auszulassen. Wir wollen nur feststellen, daß, was auch seine Kritiker immer einwenden mögen, Heiler seine These mit einer Respekt heischenden Menge Materials zu stützen vermag. Fesselnd ist auch das folgende Kapitel, in dem der Autor zeigt, das sich diese beiden Gebetstypen wiederfinden in dem Leben großer Männer, nämlich in der Form eines "kontemplativ-ästhetischen" und eines "affektiv-ethischen Typus." Aktuellen Wert kann man seiner sorgfältigen Auseinandersetzung über den Sinn des Gemeindegebetes zuerkennen. Als ein echter Religionsphänomenologe gibt Heiler sich zu erkennen, wenn er die religiöse Bedeutung enträtselft von dem "individuellen Gebet als religiöser Pflicht und gutes Werk in den Gesetzesreligionen". Das Buch wird abgerundet mit einem Kapitel über "Das Wesen des Gebetes".

Eine Reihe von Aussprüchen bezeugen, daß Heiler die Eigenart des Glaubens im reformatorischen Sinn aus eigener Erfahrung kannte und bekannte. Aber auf Grund seiner kirchlich-theologischen Herkunft und seiner geistigen Veranlagung war ihm die Mystik doch mehr ans Herz gewachsen. Öfter und weiter als irgend ein anderer hat er im Geist Streifzüge unternommen durch diese faszinierende Frömmigkeitswelt. Die Themen, die ihn sichtlich beschäftigten, waren: das Wesen der Mystik, die Punkte von Übereinstimmung und Unterschied zwischen den verschiedenen Typen, der Weg der mystischen Versenkung, die Kennzeichen des mystischen Gottesbegriffes. In einer schönen Studie über *Die Mystik in den Upanishaden* aus dem Jahr 1925 legt er den Nachdruck darauf, daß die mystische Extase als Gnade erfahren wird (S. 29). In einem Artikel in der Zeitschrift *Numen* (Vol. I, Fasc. 3) legt er ein deutliches Bild des mystischen Gottesbegriffs dar: um über Gott reden zu können, gebrauchen die Mystiker die Negation oder die doppelte Verneinung, die Kontradiktion, die *via eminentiae* und die Form der *coincidentia oppositorum*. In *Das Gebet* findet man eine "Tafel der Gebets- und Versenkungsstufen", die sehr aufklärend ist, weil sie die Parallelen zeigt in den Graden der Erlebnisse unter verschiedenen berühmten Mystikern und auch im Buddhismus (S. 312/3). Hier schließt sich die inhaltsreiche Studie über *Die Buddhistische Versenkung* von 1918 an. Heiler behandelt in ihr die verschiedenen Formen dieser Art von Meditation, und zwar: "Die vier Stufen des jhâna", "Die vier Unendlichkeitsgefühle", und "Die Stufen der abstrakten Versenkung". Am Schluß

vergleicht er die Versenkung mit dem mystischen Gebet und kommt zu dem berühmten Ausspruch: "Buddha, der Meister der Versenkung — Jesus, der Meister des Gebetes". Heiler beließ es nicht bei einer Untersuchung in seinem Studierzimmer. Es ist, so scheint es mir, bekannt, daß er nach dem Kongreß in Tokyo im Jahr 1958 in einem Zen-Kloster diesen Typus der Meditation übte.

Am Ende seines Lebens hat Heiler ein umfangreiches Handbuch zur Religionsphänomenologie geschrieben mit dem Titel *Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion*. Es ist eine Fundgrube für jeden, der Information sucht über bestimmte Gegebenheiten aus der endlosen Welt religiöser Erscheinungen. Auf zwei Characteristica dieses Werkes will ich hier hinweisen. Erstens: Der Stoff der älteren, ähnlichen Handbücher wurde hauptsächlich den primitiven, eventuell noch den antiken Religionen entnommen. Heiler hat sehr viel Material aus den höheren Religionen und besonders aus dem Christentum gesammelt, und das erhöht die Brauchbarkeit des Buches. Zweitens: In der Struktur des Buches offenbart sich sein Blick für diese Wissenschaft und sein Einblick in das Wesen der Religion. Das erste Kapitel behandelt "Die Erscheinungswelt der Religion", unter den Abteilungen heiliger Gegenstand, heiliger Ort, heilige Zeit, heilige Handlung, heiliges Wort, heilige Schrift, und der heilige Mensch. Das zweite große Kapitel gilt der "Vorstellungswelt der Religion", d.h. Gott, Schöpfung, Erlösung und Vollendung im ewigen Leben. Darauf folgt ein Kapitel von 16 Seiten über "Die Erlebniswelt der Religion", nämlich die Grundformen des religiösen Erlebnisses und die außerordentlichen religiösen Erlebnisformen. In zwei Seiten spricht Heiler mit der Beschränkung die hier angebracht ist über "Die Gegenstandswelt der Religion", d.h. von der Transzendenz des Heiligen, dem *deus absconditus*. In den letzten Seiten des Buches umschreibt er "Das Wesen der Religion". Für diese phänomenologische Betrachtung hat er in der "Einleitung" wissenschaftlich Rechenschaft abgelegt. In einem Schema auf Seite 520 verdeutlicht er seine Absicht: wie drei Ringe liegen "Die Erscheinungswelt", "Die Vorstellungswelt" und "Die Erlebniswelt" ringsum "Die Gegenstandswelt, das Objekt der Religion, die göttliche Realität".

Drittens lege ich, getreu meinem Auftrag, ein, was die Engländer "assessment" nennen, von Heilers Werk vor, das heißt: ich werde kein Urteil über Heiler als Theologen, als Liturgen und als Verfechter

ökumenischer Ideale abgeben, sondern nur ein "assessment" über seine religionswissenschaftliche Arbeit zu formulieren versuchen. Ich gebrauche mit Absicht diesen Ausdruck deshalb, weil "assessment" nicht die übliche Kritik beinhaltet, sondern eine Einschätzung gibt von einer Sache, in diesem Fall von Heilers Arbeit, speziell mit dem Blick auf heute und die Zukunft. Und dann entsteht die Frage: können seine Gedanken noch Geltung besitzen in dem gegenwärtigen religionswissenschaftlichen Gedankenklima. Um diese Frage beantworten zu können, muß man über den Zustand in dem genannten Fachgebiet auf der Höhe sein. Ich werde versuchen, den Stand der Dinge auf den Studiengebieten der Religionsgeschichte und der Religionsphänomenologie mit einigen flüchtigen Linien zu skizzieren. Man könnte über diesen Gegenstand bequem eine Reihe von Kollegs halten. Notgedrungen muß ich, um mich populär auszudrücken, im Telegrammstil reden. Wenn ich dabei apodiktische Behauptungen einfließen lasse, so möge der Hörer darauf vertrauen, daß dies keine unbegründeten Meinungen sind, sondern daß sie sich auf hier nicht weiter ausgeführte Argumente stützen.

Die Generation, zu der Heiler gehörte, d.h. Männer wie E. O. James, W. B. Kristensen, R. Pettazoni, R. Otto, M. Eliade und G. Widengren, die ihr ganzes Leben dem Studium der Religion widmen konnten und dadurch eine breite Übersicht über das ganze Gebiet der religiösen Erscheinungen erworben hatten, stirbt aus. Ihre Nachfolger sind Spezialisten. Das gilt auch für die Religionswissenschaftler von Beruf. Soweit Philologen, Soziologen und andere Interessenten der *humaniora* sich für Religionsgeschichte interessieren, verrichten sie Detailstudien, ohne sich viel um die Prinzipien zu kümmern oder größere Synthesen anzupeilen. Eine lebendige Diskussion aber kann nur auf dem Erbe der Religionsphänomenologie weitergehen. Der Brennpunkt ist das Fach selbst und seine Methode. Manche finden den Namen dieser Disziplin unbrauchbar und bezweifeln sogar ihr Daseinsrecht. Andere drängen auf eine verbesserte Methodik. Diese Probleme kamen auf einem Symposion über Methodologie in Turku (Finnland) vor einigen Jahren zur Sprache. Das Resultat war mehr oder weniger eine babylonische Sprachverwirrung. Die erwähnte Zusammenkunft aber wies einen Zug auf, der als Signal gelten muß. Das war die Teilnahme einer großen Zahl von Kultur-Anthropologen. Darin zeichnete sich die Autorität ab, die die Sozialwissenschaften,

und speziell die Kulturanthropologie, mehr und mehr erlangen. Es erscheint mir überflüssig, mich über die heutige Sucht auszulassen, überall den soziologischen Hintergrund geistiger Größen aufzudecken. Wichtig aber ist die Einsicht, daß sich dieses Streben auch bei dem Studium der Religionsgeschichte abzeichnet. Mein Landsmann, Professor dr. Th. B. van Baaren in Groningen hat als Zauberwort den Satz ausgedacht: "religion is a function of culture". Persönlich erwarte ich wenig Gewinn von dieser Studienanweisung. Auf jeden Fall müssen wir die Augen offen halten für die Tatsache, daß diese Richtung des Studieninteresses gepaart geht mit einer Überempfindlichkeit für die Einmischung der Theologie in die genannten Fächer. Man duldet keine Äußerungen, die fast einem metaphysischen Urteil über die Religion gleich kommen. Und an diesem Punkt ist Heiler, wie wir gleich sehen werden, besonders verwundbar.

Lassen Sie mich Ihnen zur Verdeutlichung meiner Worte erzählen, was mir auf dem Kongreß in Marburg 1960 geschah. In der sogenannten "General Assembly" am Ende aller Sitzungen wurde ein Memorandum aus meiner Hand über "The Future Task of the History of Religion" zur Diskussion gestellt. Dieser Beitrag löste die Zungen gehörig. Es wurde sogar durch 17 befriedete Kollegen aus verschiedenen Ländern eine Erklärung über das Minimum an Forderungen für das Studium der Religionsgeschichte eingebracht. Darin zog man besonders zu Feld gegen meine Äußerung: "The value of religious phenomena can be understood only if we keep in mind, that religion is ultimately a realisation of a transcendent truth". Man stellte die Gegenthese auf: "Religionswissenschaft is an anthropological discipline, studying the religious phenomena as a creation, feature and aspect of human culture". Man spürte die Furcht vor theologischen Urteilssprüchen, von denen ich mich, wie ich glaube, freihalten kann, wie ich es gleich noch zu beweisen hoffe. Es ist aber evident, daß Heiler nach den Einsichten der heutigen Religionswissenschaft nicht ganz konsequent war.

Nun ist Heilers Treue gegenüber der Methode kritischer Forschung über allen Verdacht erhaben. Dafür sind die Beweise nicht schwer zu liefern. In der Einleitung zu seinen *Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion* redet er selbst von der "philologia sacra". Weiter muß ich bekennen, daß ich mit ihm auf derselben Wellenlänge liege, wenn er sich leidenschaftlich einsetzt für eine Erforschung der lebenden

Religion. In einer Welt von egoistischen und aggressiven Menschen ist die Religion eine imponierende und Staunen erweckende Erscheinung. Nach meiner festen Überzeugung kann diese Erscheinung nur dann begriffen werden, wenn man sie auffaßt als Folge der Begegnung des Menschen mit dem Heiligen. Zur Verdeutlichung meines Standpunktes als Religionswissenschaftler wage ich die paradoxe These auszusprechen, daß sogar der atheistische Forscher diese Feststellung bejahen muß, wenn er die Religion wirklich verstehen will. Andererseits muß man deutlich erkennen, daß die Beantwortung der Frage nach der Wahrheit der Religion als solche oder die nach der Wahrheit in den einzelnen Religionen außerhalb der Kompetenz des Religionshistorikers liegt. Sie gehört in den Bereich der Religionsphilosophie oder der Theologie. In der Bewertung der Religion stimmen Heiler und ich völlig überein. Aber ich kann ihm nicht mehr folgen, und ich fürchte, daß er heutzutage wenig Anhang mehr finden würde, wenn er aus seinen religionsgeschichtlichen Einsichten bestimmte religionsphilosophische und theologische Schlüsse ziehen will, oder wenn er diese Wissenschaft dazu gebrauchen will, um das Verstehen zwischen Gläubigen verschiedener Religionen zu fördern. Es hat sich eine *communis opinio* auskristallisiert, die außer Zweifel setzt, daß die Religionsgeschichte ein rein akademisches Fach ist und nicht in der Lage ist, weder die Religion der Zukunft zu entwerfen, noch die Kämpfe zwischen streitenden Gläubigen beizulegen.

Lassen Sie mich meine Meinung näher erklären. In der skizzierten Gedankenzone wird Heilers Äußerung: "Alle Religionswissenschaft ist letztlich Theologie" (*Erscheinungsformen* usw. S. 17) keinen Widerhall finden, sondern im Gegenteil auf heftigen Widerstand stoßen. Wenn er weiter in *Die Religionen der Menschheit in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* mit Zustimmung die These von Max Müller zitiert: "Es gibt nur eine ewige und universale Religion, die über, unter und hinter allen Religionen steht, der alle angehören oder angehören können", dann werden die heutigen kritischen Religionshistoriker diese Meinung wohl als Glaubensbekenntnis respektieren, doch dafür keinerlei Beweis aus ihrer Wissenschaft schöpfen können. In einer Rede vor dem Kongreß in Tokyo über "The History of Religions as a Way to the Unity of Religion" hat Heiler dargelegt, dass die Religionsgeschichte viele Vorurteile vom Tisch räumen kann. Doch das ist wie ich meine eine Nebenwirkung dieser Wissenschaft.

und keineswegs ihr Hauptanliegen. Der Religionshistoriker kann sicherlich Versöhnungsarbeit leisten, aber nicht *qualitate qua*, sondern ausschließlich in einem anderen Zusammenhang, außerhalb seiner Wissenschaft. Wenn Heiler in der zitierten Rede weiter geht und sieben gemeinsame Züge der höheren Religionen formuliert, so hört man wieder den gläubigen Menschen, aber weiß zugleich, daß die Wissenschaft für diese Anschauung keine Beweise liefert.

Heiler war und ist in vielerlei Hinsicht unnachahmlich. Ich will nicht behaupten, daß er in den besprochenen Fragen Unrecht hat. Doch der Entwicklungsgang der Religionswissenschaft verlangt meines Erachtens heute, daß wir streng methodisch zu Werk gehen, die religionshistorischen Untersuchungen völlig trennen von praktischen Aktivitäten, kurzum die in Frage kommenden Fächer bearbeiten "innerhalb der Grenzen der religionswissenschaftlichen Vernunft", wie ich an anderer Stelle ausgeführt habe.

Wenn wir aber wirklich klug und weise sind, werden wir an Heilers geistigem Erbe weiterwirken. Es wären eine Anzahl von Studienobjekten zu nennen. In erster Linie kann man an seine Studien über den Katholizismus und über *Urkirche und Ostkirche* denken. Mir scheint, daß diese Bücher erneute Aktualität bekommen haben durch die Verschiebungen in der römischen Kirche und durch die Ereignisse in der ökumenischen Bewegung. Ich deutete schon an, daß Heiler hier dazu anregen kann, einen neuen wissenschaftlichen Standpunkt zu beziehen. Um der Zeit willen beschränke ich mich weiter auf eine Bemerkung über seine weitberühmte Charakteristik der Mystik und der prophetischen Frömmigkeit. Heilers Vorliebe für die Mystik ist begreiflich, wenn man liest, daß nach seiner Meinung es "die hohe Aufgabe der Religionswissenschaft ist, das religiöse Innenleben aufzudecken" (*Katholischer und evangelischer Gottesdienst*, S. 3). Bei den Mystikern kann man in der Tat bis zu dieser innerlichen Frömmigkeit vordringen. Doch gibt es auch Formen der Religion, in denen die persönlichen Erfahrungen vollkommen verschleiert sind. In den altägyptischen Dokumenten zum Beispiel kommen Zeugnisse von individuellem Glauben äußerst selten vor. Wir kennen hauptsächlich die Staatsreligion. Hinter den Mythen und Riten, die wir in den Texten finden, liegt aber eine großartige Vision verborgen, eine tiefe Einsicht in das rätselhafte Verhältnis von Leben und Tod. Das ist echte Religion, wenn sie auch nicht von emotionaler Art ist.

Wir müssen, wie mir scheint, bedenken, daß der religiöse Mensch in drei Dimensionen lebt. Er ist in erster Linie Mensch, mit allen anderen Menschen, sodaß er sagen kann: *homo sum, ac nil humani a me alienum puto*. Nichts Menschliches ist mir fremd. Aus diesem Grund hat er, zweitens, Anteil an einer allgemein menschlichen Religiosität, von Heiler genannt "Die Grundformen des religiösen Lebens", z.B. Liebe, Vertrauen, Freude. Doch der Gläubige lebt erst richtig in der dritten Dimension, in der typischen Glaubenserkenntnis seiner Religion, die eine charakteristische Struktur hat. Für dieses Erkennen Gottes, diese Gnosis, diese "godegeleerdheid", wie sie auf Holländisch heißt, hat Heiler zu wenig offenen Blick gehabt. Denn z.B. in der Mystik geht es nicht nur um die Ekstase, sondern eben so sehr um das Schauen, um das Kennenlernen der Herrlichkeit Gottes. Und in dem Buddhismus ist die "Versenkung" das Mittel, um das Nirvana zu erreichen. Doch niemand kann auf diesem Pfad wandeln, der nicht erst die erlösende Erkenntnis erworben hat. So besteht alle Veranlassung Heilers Gedankengänge sowohl die über die Mystik als auch die über den Prophetismus aufs Neue zu prüfen im Licht dieser leider allzu kurzen Bemerkungen.

Es ist in der abgelaufenen Dreiviertelstunde viel über Heiler gesprochen worden, und doch viel zu wenig, denn man wird nicht so rasch fertig mit diesem vielseitigen Gelehrten. Es ist nicht mehr als recht und billig, daß er selbst das letzte Wort bekommt. Ich zitiere aus dem Schlußabsatz von seiner Predigt über "Das Geheimnis des Gebetes" folgende Sätze: "Das Gebet ist nicht Menschenwerk, sondern Gottes Werk, nicht Menschenerfindung, sondern Gottes Offenbarung, nicht Menschenleistung, sondern Gottes Gnade. Wir müssen, so ungereimt das auch den klugen Vernunftmenschen klingen mag, beten um das Gebet".

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DIE 'IDEOLOGIEKRITISCHE' FUNKTION DER RELIGIONSWISSENSCHAFT

In den meisten der sog. gesellschafts- oder geisteswissenschaftlichen Disziplinen ist 'Ideologiekritik' ein häufig diskutiertes Schlagwort, das sich großer Beliebtheit erfreut. Von Philosophie und Soziologie angeführt, die diesen Begriff überhaupt erst aus der Taufe hoben, haben Geschichts-, Literatur-, Sprach- und Kunswissenschaft sich zunehmend 'ideologiekritisch' in den letzten Jahren beschäftigt (um nicht zu sagen "gebärdet") und ohne Zweifel gewichtige Erkenntnisfortschritte auf ihren Gebieten gemacht. Eine gewisse Ausnahme stellt die Religionswissenschaft (= Rw) dar, da sie in diesem Strom nicht mitschwamm. Die Gründe dafür werden wir noch zur Sprache bringen; sie sind unterschiedlich, wissenschaftsgeschichtlicher und methodischer Herkunft. Es wird aber an der Zeit, daß sich auch die Rw ernsthaft mit dieser Problematik beschäftigt, nicht nur weil sie vom wissenschaftlichen Standpunkt opportun ist, sondern weil sich hinter ihr die unmittelbar politisch-gesellschaftliche Wirklichkeit unserer Zeit zu Wort meldet.

Meine Ausführungen können nur erste Überlegungen zu diesem aktuellen Thema sein.¹ Bereits anlässlich des letzten (13.) "Internationalen Kongresses für Religionsgeschichte" in Lancaster 1975 (15.-22. August) habe ich wenigstens schriftlich ein kurzes Resumee eingereicht, das meine Gedanken dazu enthielt, inzwischen aber gewisse Änderungen erfahren hat. An das Problem läßt sich gut in dreierlei Weise herangehen: zunächst durch eine kurze Verständigung über die Begriffe 'Ideologie' und 'Ideologiekritik' und ihre Beziehung zu 'Religion' und 'Religionswissenschaft' (I), dann ein Ausflug in die Geschichte, der den Wandel im Verhältnis von Rw und 'Ideologie- bzw. 'Religionskritik' umreißen und verständlich machen soll, warum sich die Rw in der ideologiekritischen Debatte bisher zurückhielt (II),

¹ Sie sind Grundlage eines am 15.11.1976 im "Institut für Judaistik" der Universität Wien gehaltenen Vortrages. Herrn Koll. Prof. K. Schubert bin ich für diese Möglichkeit zu großem Dank verpflichtet, ebenso dankbar gedenke ich der lebhaften und anregenden Diskussion, die sich meinen Ausführungen anschloß und deren Ergebnisse im vorliegenden Druck teilweise eingegangen sind.

schließlich sind die Schwerpunkte und Aufgaben der religionswissenschaftlichen Ideologiekritik mit ihren praktischen Konsequenzen darzulegen (III). Alles das natürlich nur in der notwendigen Kürze.

I.

I. 1. '*Ideologie*' ist eines der gegenwärtig gängigsten Schlagworte, über dessen Herkunft und Bedeutung man sich vielfach ausschweigt, um so mehr man es verwendet. Seinen Ursprung hat das Wort im französischen (materialistischen) Sensualismus des späten 18.Jhs.² Abbé Bonnot de Condillac (1735-80) hatte mit der Analyse des menschlichen Bewußtseins als einer Umsetzung von sinnlichen Wahrnehmungen begonnen und fand in dem Physiologen Cabanis (1757-1808) und dem Grafen Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836) einflußreiche Nachfolger, die man als 'Ideologen' bezeichnete, da sie die psychologische Zergliederung der menschlichen Vorstellungen (Ideen) als Hauptaufgabe der Philosophie betrachteten. In seinen 5 bändigen *Éléments d'ideologie* (1801-1805), die nur einen Teil des geplanten Werkes ausmachen, hat de Tracy u.a. die Entstehung der Ideen (*Ideologie*) im sensualistischen Sinne ausgeführt, und dies machte ihn zum Vater des Ideologismus, der fast das ganze 19. Jh. in Frankreich Mode war. Da diese 'Ideologen' aus ihren Ergebnissen auch praktische Regeln für Erziehung, Staat und Recht ableiteten, kamen sie mit den Herrschenden in Konflikt, und kein geringerer als Napoleon I. hat sich über sie sehr geringschätzig geäußert, indem er sie für weltfremde Theoretiker erklärte, deren Ideen nur Hirngespinsten und nutzlose Lehren seien, die praktisch keine Bedeutung hätten.³ Damit war der Begriff schon gleich anfangs auch im negativen Sinne stigmatisiert worden, was seine Wirkung bis in die Gegenwart hinein gehabt hat. Ein 'Ideo-

² Darüber orientiert kurz H. Gouhier, *L'idéologie et les idéologies*, in: *Démystification et Idéologie. Actes du Colloque organisé par Centre Internationale d'Etudes humanistes et par l'Institut d'Etudes philosophiques de Rome*, Rome 4-9 Jan. 1973, aux soins de Enrico Castelli, Paris (Aubier) 1973, S. 83-92 (m. Lit.). Über de Condillac und de Tracy s. auch H. Barth, *Wahrheit und Ideologie*, Frankfurt/M. 1974 (Suhrkamp tw 68), 13ff. Condillacs "Essai über den Ursprung der menschlichen Erkenntnisse" liegt jetzt in einer neuen dt. Übersetzung u. mit ausführlicher Einleitung von U. Ricken bei Reclam (Leipzig 1977) vor.

³ Vgl. Gouhier, a.a.O. S. 85f; Barth, a.a.O. S. 22ff. Das Bonmot Napoleons wird von seinem Sekretär Bourienne überliefert (*Mémoires*, zit. bei F. Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française des origines à nos jours*, t. X, II^e partie 650 n. 2).

loge' ist ein 'Philosoph', der sich mit wirklichkeitsfremden Dingen beschäftigt (in Frankreich war lange Zeit Ideologe und Philosoph identisch). So haftete dem Wort 'Ideologie' von vornherein ein Gegensatz zu Praxis und Politik an.

Eine Weiterverfolgung der Wort- und Bedeutungsgeschichte dieses Begriffs kann hier nicht erfolgen. Bekannt ist, daß K. Marx und F. Engels den Begriff im zeitgenössischen Sinne aufgegriffen haben.⁴ In ihrer zu Lebzeiten unveröffentlichten "Deutschen Ideologie" (verfaßt 1845/46; postum veröffentlicht 1932) ist Ideologie zwar weithin negativ verwendet zur Umschreibung der (damals) "neuesten deutschen Philosophie in ihren Repräsentanten Feuerbach, B. Bauer und Stirner und des deutschen Sozialismus in seinen verschiedenen Propheten" (Untertitel). Aber es gibt auch eine allgemeine Bedeutung des Wortes i.S. eines Teiles (wörtlich: "eine der Seiten") der menschlichen Geschichte, der allerdings eine "verdrehte Auffassung dieser Geschichte" oder "eine gänzliche Abstraktion von ihr" enthält.⁵ Es ist die menschliche bewußte Vorstellungswelt, die damit gemeint ist, von der Marx und Engels nachwiesen, daß sie ihren Ursprung in konkreten gesellschaftlichen, politisch-ökonomischen Bedingungen haben, auch wenn sie nicht mit ihnen konform geht. Sehr kraß sagen Marx und Engels an einer Stelle des zitierten Buches gegenüber Max Stirner: "Die sämtlichen 'Gespenster', die wir Revue passieren ließen waren Vorstellungen. Diese Vorstellungen, abgesehen von ihrer realen Grundlage (von der Stirner absieht), als Vorstellungen innerhalb des Bewußtseins, als Gedanken im Kopfe der Menschen gefaßt, aus ihrer Gegenständlichkeit in das Subjekt zurückgenommen, aus der Substanz ins Selbstbewußtsein erhoben, sind — der Sparren oder die fixe Idee".⁶ Die 'Ideologie' der Linkshegelianer besteht also darin, daß sie die Ideen, wie schon ihr Vater Hegel, als die treibenden Kräfte der Geschichte ansehen, diese damit zu einer "Geister- und Gespenstergeschichte" machen, statt beim "wirklichen Leben",⁷ der "empirischen Geschichte"⁸ als

⁴ Vgl. Gouhier, a.a.O. S. 86ff; H. Barth, a.a.O. S. 74f. Marx bezieht sich ausdrücklich auf die Einschätzung Napoleons: MEGA III 299 (zit. bei Barth S. 303 A. 39).

⁵ So in einer im Manuskript gestrichenen Stelle: Marx/Engels, Werke Bd. 3, S. 18.

⁶ Ebd. S. 143.

⁷ Ebd. S. 27.

⁸ Ebd. S. 113.

der wahren Grundlage der Ideengeschichte einzusetzen: damit hat "die wirkliche, positive Wissenschaft" zu beginnen.⁹ So zeigt sich hier, daß Marx und Engels einerseits den zeitgemäßen Gebrauch von Ideologie aufnehmen, ihm andererseits aber durch ihre konkret-historische Sicht einen neuen Klang geben, der sich in der Folgezeit als sehr wirkungsvoll bemerkbar macht und von dem noch die moderne Soziologie — über die Wissenssoziologie der 20er Jahre hinweg — vielfach bestimmt ist. In einem Brief an F. Mehring vom 14.6.93 schreibt Engels kurz und bündig: "Die Ideologie ist ein Prozeß, der zwar mit Bewußtsein vom sogenannten Denker vollzogen wird, aber mit einem falschen Bewußtsein. Die eigentlichen Triebkräfte, die ihn bewegen, bleiben ihm unbekannt; sonst wäre es eben kein ideologischer Prozeß".¹⁰ Ideologie ist demnach vom Standpunkt des Marxismus vornehmlich verkehrtes Bewußtsein, das sich kein richtiges Bild von der Geschichte macht und, da die gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse es auch nicht ermöglichen, nicht machen kann. Erst die richtige, marxistische Einsicht führt auch zu einem korrekten Bewußtsein und damit zu einer den tatsächlichen Triebkräften der Geschichte entsprechenden Ideologie. Man spricht deshalb heute auch durchaus von einer "sozialistischen Ideologie",¹¹ die mit dem Marxismus-Leninismus identisch ist. Ideologie ist nach heutiger marxistischer Auffassung eine bestimmte Summe gesellschaftlicher Anschauungen (wozu Philosophie, Religion, Musik und Wissenschaft gehören können, also der sog. "Überbau"), die einzelnen Klasseninteressen dienen oder das "gesellschaftliche Bewußtsein"¹² der Klassenkräfte. Über ihre Richtigkeit oder Falschheit bestimmt die Stellung zu den Auseinandersetzungen der Klassen, der auch ihren Inhalt bestimmt. Ideologie ist danach eine funktionale Angelegenheit, keine absolute.

Die nicht-marxistische Auffassung hat demgegenüber einen uneinheitlichen Charakter und tendiert, soweit ich das überhaupt überblicken und beurteilen kann, von einer dem Marxismus verpflichteten Ansicht bis zu den positivistischen Konzeptionen, wie sie sehr einflußreich Theodor Geiger vertrat, für den Ideologie die Nicht-Übereinstimmung mit der Wirklichkeit bedeutete, wozu dann alle

⁹ Ebd. S. 27.

¹⁰ Marx/Engels, Ausgewählte Werke, Bd. 6, S. 596.

¹¹ G. Klaus/M. Buhr, Philosophisches Wörterbuch, Leipzig⁷ 1970, Bd. 1, 505.

¹² Ebd. S. 506.

metaphysischen und theologischen Aussagen gehörten, da sie ihre subjektiven Werturteile als objektive Erkenntnisaussagen von "Ist-Charakter" ausgeben.¹³ Der von Kurt Lenk herausgegebene Band "Ideologie" macht die Disparatheit mehr als deutlich.¹⁴ Nicht einmal der Herausgeber wagt sich an eine Definition des Wortes, sondern umschreibt die verschiedenen Standpunkte in einer phänomenologisch-typologischen Übersicht. Faßt man Ideologie einmal neutral i.S. eines wissenschaftlichen terminus technicus, so müßte man streng genommen bei seinem Ursprung und seiner sprachlichen Grundbedeutung ansetzen und ihn als "Lehre von den Ideen" bestimmen. Da dies aber zu unhistorisch ist und der bald 200-jährigen Verwendung und Debatte nicht entsprechen würde, ist es m.E. besser, unter diesem Begriff die historisch entstandenen und weltanschaulich geprägten Vorstellungen der Menschen zu verstehen, die ihr Denken, Empfinden und Verhalten in ausschlaggebender Weise bestimmen.¹⁵ Die Vielfalt, die dabei in einen unanschaulichen abstrakten Begriff zusammengezogen wird, läßt sich bei der Anwendung nur wieder zur Geltung bringen, indem man ihn der konkret historischen oder philosophischen Arbeit dienstbar macht. Dabei wird sich auch durch selbstkritische Reflexion zu bewahren haben, ob der so verwendete Ideologebegriff selbst ideologisch

¹³ Th. Geiger, Ideologie und Wahrheit. Eine soziologische Kritik des Denkens, 1. Aufl. Wien 1953, 2. Aufl. Neuwied/Rh. (Luchterhand), 1968. An Geiger knüpft u.a. K. Acham, Vernunft und Engagement, Wien 1972, S. 22ff ausdrücklich an (s.u. A. 15).

¹⁴ "Soziologische Studentexte" bei Luchterhand/Neuwied a. Rhein, 4. Aufl. 1970.

¹⁵ Damit umgehe ich die rein pejorativ und am exakten Wissenschaftsideal orientierte Definition von K. Acham, a.a.O. S. 20 u. 216, der sich dabei auf W. Hofmann, Wissenschaft, in: Arch. f. Rechts- u. Sozialphilosophie 53, 1967, 197-213, bes. 201f beruft: "Ideologien sind unzutreffende Auffassungen und Aussagen, an deren Entstehung, Verbreitung und Bewahrung sich gesellschaftliche Interessen knüpfen". Letzteres ist unbestritten, erstes ein erst nachträglich mit der Wahrheitsfrage verbundenes, nicht rein objektives Urteil. Acham, der sich an Geiger orientiert (s.o. A. 13), sieht in der Ideologie eine "Festhaltung überholter Auffassungen", eine "Scheintheorie" (21), die "stets hinter der bereits möglich gewordenen oder bereits einmal erreichten Einsicht" zurückbleibt und damit den Charakter des "denkgeschichtlichen Regresses" trägt (216), muß davon aber noch zusätzlich (wie W. Hofmann a.a.O.) den "Irrtum" unterscheiden (21). Der Bezug ist hier die Wissenschaftstheorie und philosophische (gnoseologische) Weltdeutung als die von uns anvisierte allgemeine Vorstellungswelt als Ideologie, in die jene zwar eingehen und wirksam sind, aber nur einen Teil (z.B. betr. der Religion) bilden.

anfällig geworden ist; er darf sich gegen eine Selbstanwendung nicht abschirmen.¹⁶

Diese längere Einleitung zum Ideologieverständnis war unumgänglich, da sie für unser Thema grundlegend ist. Es ergibt sich nämlich jetzt die Frage, inwieweit das, was man herkömmlich unter "*Religion*" versteht, unter dem Begriff "Ideologie" subsumieren kann. Gemacht worden ist es schon häufig, auch soweit gehend, daß man kaum noch differenzierte und z.B. Religionsgeschichte in Ideologiegeschichte auflöste. Ohne hier an eine längere Diskussion anzuknüpfen, möchte ich meine Meinung dazu folgendermaßen zusammenfassen: Religion, um diesen unhistorischen Begriff in der Einzahl einmal bequemerweise zu verwenden, ist nur teilweise unter Ideologie im oben genannten Sinne einzuordnen, denn sie umfaßt in ihren historischen und gegenwärtigen Gestalten mehr als nur "Ideen", bzw. Vorstellungen. Der ganze Kult und die Organisation (Priesterschaft!), abgesehen von den durch sie geprägten Lebensformen, lassen einen beträchtlichen Teil dessen, was man bei den einzelnen Religionen und Religionsformen vorfindet und zu ihnen auch *wesentlich* gehört, aus dem Ideologiebegriff herausfallen. Erscheinungen, wie die christlichen Kirchen — ganz deutlich bei der römisch-katholischen Kirche — oder des traditionellen Lamaismus, sind zwar von einer "religiösen Ideologie" bestimmt, die ihr Wesen überhaupt ausmacht, aber sie ist nur die eine Seite, die andere wird von der Praxis und dem Leben in Kult, Ethik, gesellschaftlicher Organisation eingenommen. Religion besteht, um es einmal so zu formulieren, aus einer "Ideologie", d.h. einer "religiösen Ideologie" oder "Ideologie einer Religion" und einer sozialen, politischen und ethisch-moralischen Praxis. Daß hierbei die verschiedenen historischen und gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse von Einfluß und Bedeutung für die jeweiligen Formen sind, versteht sich von selbst und braucht in diesem Zusammenhang nicht ausgeführt zu werden.

I. 2. Im Schatten der Anwendung von 'Ideologie' findet sich fast ständig die *Ideologiekritik*, mit der wir uns nunmehr beschäftigen müssen. Schon der Überblick über einige Seiten der Geschichte des

¹⁶ Vgl. R. Bubner, in: Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik. Theorie-Diskussion. Suhrkamp-Verlag, Frankfurt/M. 1975, S. 237. Zur Kritik am soziologischen Ideologismus s. auch H. Barth, Wahrheit und Ideologie, S. 284ff.

Ideologiebegriffs gab einen Geschmack davon, wie seine Verwendung unmittelbar eine kritische Funktion beinhaltete. Vor allem im marxistischen Gebrauch ist dies sehr deutlich und braucht nicht weiter erörtert werden. Die kritische Einschätzung der herrschenden Ideologie, wie sie Marx und Engels vortrugen, hat dem gesamten marxistischen Ideologieverständnis den maßgebenden Stempel aufgedrückt, so daß ein neutraler Gebrauch des Wortes nicht aufkommen konnte. "Ideologischer Klassenkampf" ist eine wesentliche Form der Auseinandersetzung mit der "bürgerlichen Ideologie", der auch im Zeichen friedlicher Koexistenz nicht aufgehört hat; es ist allerdings ein mehr friedlicher Kampf, ein Kampf mit den Waffen des Geistes, wie man es nennen kann.

Die nicht-marxistische Auffassung von Ideologiekritik ist, gleich wie im Falle der 'Ideologie' recht differenziert und kann nur schwer auf einen Nenner gebracht werden (abgesehen davon, daß man sie natürlich generell als "bürgerliche Ideologiekritik" bezeichnen kann). Aus der Kenntnis der hierfür herangezogenen Literatur habe ich mir zur Regel gemacht, verschiedene Arten von "Ideologiekritik" zu unterscheiden. Schon Th. Geiger sprach von "pragmatischer" Ideologiekritik, die für ihn keine wissenschaftliche Angelegenheit war, und "theoretischer" oder "logischer" Ideologiekritik, die als wissenschaftliches Vorhaben die Denkfehler der Ideologie bloßlegen sollte.¹⁷ Meine Einteilung besteht aus philosophischer Ideologiekritik, soziologischer Ideologiekritik, historischer Ideologiekritik und politischer (pragmatischer) Ideologiekritik. Diese vier können ineinander übergehen und haben es auch häufig getan, da sie von einander abhängig oder aufeinander angewiesen sind. Für unseren Fall sind die soziologische und historische Ideologiekritik diejenigen, die sich zunächst am besten mit der Rw verbinden lassen, was nicht ausschließt, daß auch die philosophische und pragmatisch-po-

¹⁷ Ideologie u. Wahrheit (s.o. Anm. 13), S. 155ff, 160f. Leider hat A. Heuß in seinem lebenswerten Traktat über "Ideologiekritik" (Berlin 1975) sich dieser differenzierenden Kritik behoben, indem er vornehmlich eine Art von Ideologiekritik, die pragmatisch orientiert ist, soziologisch aufs Korn nimmt (die wiederum nur einer Schulrichtung, der "neomarxistischen" von Marcuse und Habermas zugehört). Das Moment der "Aburteilung" (52), der "Diffamierung" (56), des "Dezisionismus" (67) und was deren Beschreibungen noch mehr sind, ist daher noch kein Grund, Ideologiekritik überhaupt fallen zu lassen. Man muß ihre Formen unterscheiden und von einem mehr neutralen Gebrauch von Ideologie ausgehen.

litische Ideologiekritik für die Rw von Bedeutung sein können. Generell vom Selbstverständnis der Rw als einer primär historisch-philologischen Disziplin ist aber die historische Ideologiekritik ihr am nächststehenden und läßt sich in ihren Aufgabenbereich o.w. integrieren, wie wir sehen werden. Unter historischer Ideologiekritik verstehe ich eine sachliche, um Objektivität bemühte Kritik, die sich aus dem Geschäft der historischen Arbeit als solche ergibt, angefangen von der Quellen- und Überlieferungskritik bis zu der sich daraus ergebenden kritischen Reflexion der religiösen Vorstellungswelt mit ihren emanzipatorischen Konsequenzen.

Damit wäre zugleich auch das Verhältnis zur *Religionskritik*angeschnitten, das sich zusammen mit der Ideologiekritik einstellt. Wenn Ideologie und Religion zusammenfallen, ist auch ihre Kritik ein gemeinsamer Vorgang, der sich einem gleichen Objekt widmet. Wir haben aber gesehen, daß diese Gleichsetzung nicht o.w. angeht, so daß auch auf der Ebene der Kritik zu differenzieren ist. Außerdem ist unsere Unterscheidung von mehreren Ideologiekritiken hilfreich für die Auseinanderhaltung von "Religionskritik" im engeren Sinne und Ideologiekritik. Ist erstere im pragmatischen Sinne gemeint, so kann sie nicht Aufgabe der Rw sein. Eine soziologische und historische Religionskritik hat dagegen durchaus Recht auf einen Platz in der Rw, insofern sie deren Geschäft befruchten kann (s.u.). Religionskritik ist dann eine Ideologiekritik, die sich auf eine religiöse Ideologie oder die Ideologie einer oder mehrerer Religionen bezieht und hat ihre dementsprechenden unterschiedlichen Aspekte, wie wir sie aufgeführt haben. Religionskritik ist also nicht gleich Religionskritik! Sie ist von den ihr jeweils zugrundeliegenden Absichten und den verwendeten Methoden abhängig und bestimmt. Die Rw bedient sich bei ihren ideologiekritischen Ambitionen, wie wir sie noch beschreiben werden, insofern auch religionskritischer Überlegungen, sieht es allerdings nicht als ihre Hauptaufgabe an oder geht gar darin völlig auf. Für sie sind religionskritische Konsequenzen Teil und Ergebnis einer Ideologiekritik, die sie als historisch-philologische Disziplin implizit (und auch explizit) betreibt.

In welcher Weise vom eben gesprochenen Methodischen her für die Rw eine Verbindung mit der Ideologiekritik geboten erscheint, zeigen Überlegungen, die (wie K.-O. Apel) "szientistische" und "hermeneu-

tische", oder anders ausgedrückt naturwissenschaftliche "Erklärung" mit dem geisteswissenschaftlichen "Verstehen" in der 'Ideologiekritik' zu vermitteln suchen.¹⁸ Die Rw ist bekanntlich ein immer wieder herangezogenes Beispiel für eine nur mit hermeneutischem "Verstehensbegriff", wie ihm Dilthey und seine Schule entwickelte, arbeitende "Geisteswissenschaft". Man sprach von einer "Rw des Verstehens" (G. Mensching) als der Krönung religionswissenschaftlicher Methode und Arbeit überhaupt. Die Gefahren, die damit verbunden waren, sind uns heute deutlicher als früher, da inzwischen auch diese Art Hermeneutik generell ins Kreuzfeuer der Kritik geraten ist. Man hat demgegenüber an die neopositivistischen Erklärungsmodelle, wie sie die anglo-amerikanische Wissenschaftstheorie entwickelte, apellierte und "Verstehen" als einen psychologischen Vorfeldakt des eigentlichen wissenschaftlichen "Erklärens", d.h. der Erkenntnis von Ursache, Wirkung und Subsumtion unter Gesetze, aufgefaßt. Ohne hier diese aktuelle Problematik weiter zu erörtern, muß bemerkt werden, daß die von einer einseitigen hermeneutischen Methode des "Verstehens" her eingetretene Vernachlässigung der Kritik von Überlieferung und Wirkungsgeschichte, ein Korrektiv von Seiten des analytischen und kritischen Rationalismus nötig hat.¹⁹ Eine Brücke zu schlagen zwischen beiden Bemühungen, geschichtswissenschaftliche Erkenntnis zu begründen und methodisch zu sichern, haben H. Albert²⁰ auf der einen und K.-O. Apel²¹ auf der anderen Seite unternommen. Von beiden wird dabei der 'Ideologiekritik' eine

¹⁸ In: Wiener Jahrbuch für Philosophie 1, 1968, 15-45; Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik. Theorie-Diskussion (s.o. A. 16), S. 7-44.

¹⁹ Vgl. H. Albert, 'Theorie, Verstehen und Geschichte', in: Ztschr. f. Allgem. Wissenschaftstheorie I, 1970, S. 2-23; Traktat über kritische Vernunft, Tübingen³ 1975, S. 13ff, 135ff, 206f. Von religionswissenschaftlicher Seite: K. Rudolph, The Position of Source Research in Religious Studies, in: Methodology of the Science of Religion. Proceedings of the Study Conference of the I.A.H.R. in Turku, Finland, Aug. 27-31, 1973, The Hague 1978 (Religion and Reason 12), S. 148ff; H. Seiwert, Systematische Religionswissenschaft: Theoriebildung und Empiriebezug, in: Ztschr. f. Missions- und Religionswiss. 61, 1977, 1-18; Ders., Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer Anwendung der Prinzipien des kritischen Rationalismus im Rahmen der Religionswissenschaft, ungedruckte Magisterschrift Bonn 1977; G. Neuf, Religionswissenschaft aus der Sicht der Analytischen Philosophie, in: G. Stephenson (Hrsg.), Der Religionswandel unserer Zeit im Spiegel der Religionswissenschaft, Darmstadt 1976, S. 339-354.

²⁰ Hermeneutik und Realwissenschaft, in: Sozialtheorie und soziale Praxis, Meisenheim 1971.

²¹ Vgl. oben Anm. 18.

ausschlaggebende Position zugeschrieben. Für Albert liegt ihr Sinn darin, Aufklärung, Vorurteilsfreiheit, wissenschaftliches und anti-dogmatisches Denken zu fördern,²² für Apel darin, die reflexiv vom "Verstehen" nicht einzuholenden, "vernunftlosen Momente unseres geschichtlichen Daseins", also das (naturhaft) Irrationale, aufzuheben, wobei er an "‘Psychoanalyse’ der menschlichen Sozialgeschichte" und "‘Psychotherapie’ der aktuellen Krisen des menschlichen Handelns" denkt, die für ihn "die einzige sinnvolle logische Begründung und moralische Rechtfertigung der objektiv erklärenden Wissenschaften vom Menschen darstellen".²³ Auch H.-G. Gadamer gesteht zu, daß hermeneutische Reflexion gleichfalls 'praktisch', d.h. in diesem Sinne 'ideologiekritisch' zu werden vermag: "sie macht jede Ideologie verdächtig, indem sie Vorurteile bewußt macht".²⁴ Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik durchdringen sich also. RW kann jedenfalls auch aus diesen geschichtsphilosophischen Bemühungen ihr gutes Recht ableiten, ideologiekritische Probleme in ihrem Bereich zur Sprache zu bringen.

I. 3. Damit ist zugleich ein Übergang zu der eigentlich ideologiekritischen Funktion der RW aus ihrem Wesen und ihrem Gegenstand heraus gefunden. Wie schon anderenorts von mir ausgeführt wurde,²⁵ ist die RW als eine objektiv arbeitende philologisch-historische und vergleichend-systematische Disziplin der Geisteswissenschaften an kein religiöses Weltbild oder Urteil gebunden, ja kennt streng genommen kein "Heiliges" als solches, das sie zur Streckung ihrer Waffen zwingen könnte. Dieses Wissenschaftideal, das einen "methodischen Atheismus" (H. Gollwitzer) einschließt, ist für den Gegenstand der RW insofern schon "ideologiekritisch" wirksam, als der Anspruch, den religiöse Aussagen in ihren Traditionen zur Geltung bringen, von der RW "eingeklammert" und nicht weiter in seinem existentiellen Bezug Ernst genommen wird und werden kann (da sie sonst sich in einen Pluralismus religiöser Bekenntnisse auflösen müßte). Die hermeneutische Problematik, die sich hier der RW in einer sehr delikaten Weise stellt, ist schon wiederholt Gegenstand

²² Traktat über kritische Vernunft, S. 88f.

²³ In: Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik, S. 38f, 43f.

²⁴ Ebd. S. 298, 300, 313f u.o. Auch bei K. Acham ist Ideologiekritik primär als Vorurteilskritik verstanden (Vernunft und Engagement, S. 215ff). Vgl. dazu unten Abschn. III (S. 16).

²⁵ Die Problematik der Religionswissenschaft als akademisches Lehrfach, in: Kairos IX, 1967, S. 22-42, bes. 40.

der Debatte gewesen und trennt auch heute noch die einzelnen religionswissenschaftlichen Schulen.²⁶ Sie hier erneut aufzunehmen, fehlt es an Raum, aber im Zusammenhang unseres Themas zeigt sich wieder, daß sich hier die Weichen für die Selbständigkeit der Rw als einer eigenen Disziplin stellen.²⁷ Die von ihr geforderte wissenschaftliche Distanz gegenüber ihrem Gegenstand, die kein interesseloses Zuschauen bedeuten muß, bringt sie von vornherein in eine ideologie- bzw. religionskritische Situation: Religionen werden ihres Anspruchs Wahrheit, Autorität und göttliche Offenbarung zu sein, entkleidet und auf dem geschichtswissenschaftlichen, soziologischen und psychologischen Seziertisch analysiert. Dies klingt zwar banal und manchen Ohren erschreckend, ist aber nicht zu umgehen. Wissenschaft ist nun einmal Kritik, die bis zu den Wurzeln des Seins schneiden kann. So ist die Rw ein besonders anschauliches Beispiel dafür, wie wissenschaftlich-kritisches Vorgehen ein ideologiekritisches Bewußtsein voraussetzt bzw. impliziert und entsprechende Konsequenzen zeitigt. Die wissenschaftliche Methode vertreibt auch in diesem, für die Menschheit so existentiell tiefen Bereich ihres Erkennens und Handelns, wenn sie sich ihm zuwendet, den Hauch und Glanz des überirdischen Nimbus, der Epiphanie des Göttlichen oder der "Letzten Wirklichkeit". Dies ist m.E. auch nicht in das Belieben des einzelnen Religionswissenschaftlers bzw. -historikers gestellt, sondern ist eine unumgängliche und *unumkehrbare* Funktion der Rw selbst, sofern man sie als eine wissenschaftliche Angelegenheit betreibt. (Eine Diskussion über den hier verwendeten Wissenschaftsbegriff kann natürlich einiges von meinen Voraussetzungen klären, aber m.E. nicht grundsätzlich ändern).

Ist so das ideologie- bzw. religions-kritische Geschäft bereits aus Wesen und Methode der Rw verstehbar gemacht, so ist übrigens auch darauf einzugehen, daß von ihrem Gegenstand, den Religionen, ein "kritisches Bewußtsein" nicht ungefragt ist, ja Religionskritik sogar als ein innerreligiöses Phänomen betrachtet werden kann. Dar-

²⁶ Vgl. den Überblick von H. Pummer, Religionswissenschaft or Religiology? *Numen* 19, 1972, S. 91-127 und U. Bianchi, *The History of Religions*, Leiden 1975, S. 163ff.

²⁷ Meine Position, wie sie in dem Anm. 25 angeführten Aufsatz dargestellt ist: Das Problem der Autonomie und Integration der Religionswissenschaft, *Ned. Theol. Tijdschr.* 27, 1973, S. 105-131; *The Position of Source Research* (s.o. Anm. 19).

auf ist in jüngster Zeit Richard Schaeffler in seinem Buch "Religion und kritisches Bewußtsein"²⁸ näher eingegangen. Für ihn hat die Gegenüberstellung von kritischem und religiösem Bewußtsein keinen ausschließenden Charakter, da auch Religion "kritisches Bewußtsein enthält und zu seiner Entwicklung beigetragen hat. Auch wenn ich nicht mit allen Ansichten und Folgerungen des Verf.s. einverstanden bin (sowohl auf philosophischer als auch historischer Ebene), so ist es ihm m.E. doch gelungen, eine nähere Verbindung (Sch. spricht sogar von einer Korrelation) von "Religion" und "Kritik" nachzuweisen. Es gibt demnach eine "Relevanz der Religion für das Selbstverständnis des kritischen Bewußtseins".²⁹ Einmal gibt es neben der philosophischen Form des kritischen Bewußtseins auch eine religiöse Gestalt eines solchen, die sogar älter ist und jene vorbereitet (Mythenkritik), zum anderen ist die Religionskritik nicht nur eine philosophische, sondern auch teilweise eine religiöse Angelegenheit. Letztere sieht Sch. etwas unglücklich in der Anwendung der Kategorie des Heiligen zur Durchführung kommen: als Mittel der Welt-, Erkenntnis- und Religionskritik.³⁰ Die Kategorie des Heiligen macht das religiöse Bewußtsein fähig, kritisch zu sein.³¹ Dies erinnert an das "protestantische Prinzip" Paul Tillichs, von dem Sch. überhaupt (neben R. Otto) abhängig zu sein scheint. Es läßt sich nicht leugnen, daß damit eine Erscheinung in der Religionsgeschichte philosophisch-theologisch zur Sprache gebracht wird, die Sch. als "religionskritische Religionen" bezeichnet, und die er als Ausdruck solcher kritischer Impulse der Religion ansieht.³² Er führt die "religiöse Revolution" des Echnaton, die Mysterienkulte (Osirisgericht!) und Zoroaster dafür an und sieht in ihnen Vorbereitungen zur philosophischen Religionskritik, wie sie in Griechenland auftritt.³³ Auch das Christentum gehört dazu, da es das moderne

²⁸ München: Alber 1973.

²⁹ Ebd. S. 415ff.

³⁰ Ebd. S. 107-253.

³¹ Ebd. S. 212, 421.

³² Ebd. S. 352ff.

³³ Ebd. S. 354ff. Völlig übersehen hat Sch. das Alte Testament und seine Religionskritik, wie sie H. D. Preuß, *Die Verspottung fremder Religionen in AT, Neukirchen/Vluyn 1971* zuletzt ausführlich behandelt hat. Vgl. auch H. Breit, *Überlegungen zur Religionskritik des AT*, in: H. Breit u. K.-D. Nörenberg (Hrsg.), *Religionskritik als theologische Herausforderung*, München 1972 (Theol. Existenz heute 170), S. 9-29.

kritische, säkulare Bewußtsein vorbereitet und aus sich entläßt.³⁴

Eine ausführliche Diskussion der Thesen von Schaeffler verbietet sich hier und ist für unser Thema auch nicht unmittelbar nötig. Sch. übersieht natürlich, daß das, was er als "innerreligiöse Kritik" bezeichnet, oft von außen in die Religion hineingetragen und nicht immer als autochthon religiös zu betrachten ist. Richtig ist daran aber, daß das *eine* menschliche Bewußtsein in kritischer Funktion sowohl in Religion als auch Philosophie tätig sein kann. Ferner ist mit Recht der Gedanke der "Entfremdung" und seine Überwindung auch im religiösen Bereich von Sch. zur Sprache gebracht worden.³⁵ Die sog. "religionskritischen Religionen" sind natürlich nur *cum grano salis* so zu verstehen: es sind spezifische Religionsformen, die die herkömmliche Tradition sprengen und zu überwinden suchen. Es ist der Geist der Propheten und Reformatoren, der hier in Rede steht. Dahinter verbirgt sich das tatsächlich erstaunliche Phänomen, daß sich Religionen in einzelnen Vertretern oder Gruppen (vor allem sofern sie "Buchreligionen" sind) selbtkritisch in Frage stellen können — alle großen Weltreligionen sind aus einem solchen Akt geboren worden. Die Ursachen dafür sind dabei nicht "rein" religiös zu sehen, sondern sind vielgestaltig, aber sie werden unter religiösen Vorzeichen verstanden. Die theologische Tradition hat darüber hinaus wiederholt das Recht der Selbtkritik in Anspruch genommen.³⁶ "Die Religion ist in sich selbst und mit sich selbst kritisch: als Kritik ihrer Prinzipien an der Wirklichkeit oder als kritische Differenz zwischen dem, was sie ihrem Wesen nach sein soll, und dem, was sie in ihrer Erscheinung ist".³⁷

Die *Rw* kann aus diesen selbtkritischen Vorgängen in den Reli-

³⁴ Vgl. Schaeffler, a.a.O. S. 315ff, 329ff, 387ff. Diese These hat bekanntlich als erster der evangelische Theologe F. Gogarten formuliert und näher begründet.

³⁵ A.a.O. S. 184ff.

³⁶ Vgl. dazu J. Splett, Zur Kritik und Selbtkritik der Religion, in: Ztschr. f. kath. Theol. 92, 1970, S. 48-59; K.-H. Weger (Hrsg.), Religionskritik. Beitr. zur atheist. Religionskritik der Gegenwart, München 1976, S. 31 (positive Religionskritik als Polemik gegen religiöse Fehlformen).

³⁷ D. Rössler, Die Vernunft der Religion, München 1976 (Slg. Piper 135), S. 9; vgl. auch S. 25: "Religionskritik als kritische Beurteilung konkreter Religion am Maßstab ihrer Idee gehört zur Religion selbst hinzu". Dies ist natürlich nur der Fall, wo ein solcher Maßstab (etwa in Form hlg. Urkunden!) vorhanden ist oder darüber (Idee!) überhaupt reflektiert wird (was für die alten Volksreligionen weithin nicht zutrifft).

gionen entnehmen, daß ihrem Gegenstand selbst ein kritisches Geschäft nicht fremd ist und "Religionskritik" daher durchaus auch religiöse Ursachen haben kann. Darüber hinaus ist es für den einer Religion verbundenen Religionswissenschaftler durchaus möglich, von seinem kritischen 'religiösen' Bewußtsein aus, die religions- und ideologiekritische Arbeit auf seinem Gebiet voranzutreiben. Es gibt *keinerlei* Grund religiöses Bewußtsein, sofern es selbstkritisch reflektiert erscheint, als Hemmnis für eine objektive, historisch-kritische Rv anzusehen oder gar als unangebracht zu desavouieren. Im christlichen Traditionsbereich ist die Rv entstanden, wenn auch oft im Widerspruch zu ihr, und hat von hier auch ihre kritischen Voraussetzungen erhalten; dies sollte trotz allem nicht vergessen werden (s.u.).

Zum Schluß dieses Abschnittes sollte noch auf eine Art ideologiekritisches Vorgehen hingewiesen werden, von der die Rv einiges lernen kann, und das unmittelbar ihre eigene diesbezügliche Arbeit berührt. Es sind die ideologiekritischen Untersuchungen von Ernst Topitsch.³⁸ Seine Analysen des mythologisch-metaphysischen Weltbildes von seinen primitiven Ursprüngen bis zu seinen verwandelten, aber noch deutlich sichtbaren Nachwirkungen in den modernen Welt-auffassungen haben durch den Nachweis der Abhängigkeit dieser Strukturen von dem frühgeschichtlichen Erfahrungsraster eine unmittelbar ideologiekritische Wirkung. Biomorphe, anthropomorphe, technomorphe und soziomorphe Modellvorstellungen sind die prägenden Muster eines größten Teils unserer traditionellen religiösen, philosophischen, politischen und ästhetischen Welterklärung oder Weltanschauung und des menschlichen Selbstverständnisses. Der Projektionsmechanismus, der hier in der Nachfolge von Feuerbach und Freud aufgewiesen wird, ist auch für die Rv von unmittelbarem Gewicht, da die religiös-mythologische Überlieferung einen wesentlichen Anteil an der Formung, Tradierung und Erhaltung dieses Weltbildes hat. Verhängnisvoll war, daß es dabei weniger auf Richtigkeit, als vielmehr auf psychologische und unmittelbar praktisch-politische Wirksamkeit ankam. Nur so erklärt sich die jahrtausendelange Gültig-

³⁸ Vgl. die Arbeiten: *Vom Ursprung und Ende der Metaphysik*, Wien 1958 (dtv München 1972); *Sozialphilosophie zwischen Ideologie und Wissenschaft*, Neuwied/Rh. 1961², 1966; *Mythos-Philosophie-Politik*, Freiburg/B. 1969; *Gottwerdung und Revolution*, München 1973.

³⁹ *Vom Ursprung* (dtv-Ausgabe), S. 11.

keit dieser Weltauffassung.³⁹ Aus der "normativen Rückanwendung der intentionalen Modelle" ergeben sich nur "leere Formeln", die gerade deshalb "psychologisch-politisch eine schlechthin universelle Verwendbarkeit besitzen".⁴⁰ Der Rw wird hier anschaulich gezeigt, in welcher Weise ein ideologiekritisches Durchleuchten von Überlieferungen von unmittelbarer Relevanz für unser gegenwärtiges Welt- und Menschenbild sein kann. "Die wissenschaftliche Erkenntnis", bemerkt Topitsch, "muß die Erfüllung vieler Wünsche versagen, sie vermag keinen Trost und kein Gefühl der Geborgenheit zu vermitteln und muß in letzter Konsequenz auch die subtile Kunst der Selbst-illusionierung, die mit Hilfe jener Leerformeln geübt wurde und wird, als solche aufdecken".⁴¹ Daher ist sie auch nicht immer opportun.

II.

Ein kurzer Ausflug in die *Geschichte der Rw* soll uns klar machen, wie wechselvoll das Verhältnis von Ideologie- bzw. Religionskritik und Rw gewesen ist. Sofern man nicht bis zu Herodot zurückgreifen will, liegen die Ursprünge der modernen Rw im 17. und 18. Jh., und hier sind sie eng mit der Religionskritik der sog. "Aufklärung" verbunden. Diese Religionskritik bezog sich in erster Linie auf das in Kirchen organisierte Christentum. Mit Hilfe zweier einflußreicher Gedanken versuchte man nicht nur eine historisch-soziologische und philosophische, sondern auch eine pragmatische Religionskritik in die Wege zu leiten: einmal mit der Theorie vom Priesterbetrug, zum anderen mit der von der sog. natürlichen Religion. Während erstere sich vor allem im vorrevolutionären Frankreich gegen das mit der Kirche verknüpfte ancien régime richtete und so direkt politische Bedeutung erhielt, kam die Idee von der angeborenen Religion des Menschen zwar als Pendant einer gleichen Tendenz entgegen, hatte aber weiterwirkende Bedeutung. Für beide Theorien suchte man in unterschiedlicher Weise Begründungen aus dem zur Verfügung stehenden Material, das die Religionsgeschichte bot (bes. das große Werk von Picart über die "Sitten und Gebräuche der Völker" von 1723/28). Die dabei geübte Überlieferungskritik wurde vielfach unmittelbar in die Religionskritik umgemünzt (dieser Aspekt der Traditionskritik in der Aufklärung ist übrigens ein Aspekt, den F. Meinecke in seiner

⁴⁰ Ebd. S. 371.

⁴¹ Sozialphilosophie, S. 341.

“Entstehung des Historismus” übersehen hat; auch dieser hat das historische Denken vorbereitet).

Es waren natürlich vornehmlich Philosophen, die sich hier engagierten, während die als erste Religionshistoriker zu bezeichnenden Gelehrten (Meiners, Kleuker und Flügge) sich bescheideten, sachlich zu arbeiten und mit dem Ohr bei den historischen Quellen zu bleiben.⁴² Aber auch sie wendeten sich gegen die übermächtige christliche Dogmatik und fochten für eine unbefangene Religionsbetrachtung, die sich ihre Ergebnisse nicht vorschreiben ließ und auch in anderen Religionen “Wahrheit” fand, nicht bloß Irrtum und verwerfenswertes Heidentum.⁴³ Herder war dafür maßgebend und in seiner Nachfolge hat dann Schleiermacher eine Religionsbestimmung durchgeführt, die für die RW des 19. Jhs. weithin bestimmt wurde. Religion ist eine Naturanlage des Menschen, die auch außerhalb der christlichen ihren Wert hat, da sie als “Anschauung des Unendlichen” Gottes natürliche Offenbarung darstellt. Hier ist das Erbe der Aufklärung mit einem theologisch-romantischen Geist verknüpft worden. Das emanzipatorische Interesse der Religionsbeschäftigung des 18. Jhs., das zu einer neuen Form von Religionsphilosophie gegenüber der alten dogmatischen “natürlichen Theologie” fand,⁴⁴ hat sich zwar nicht in einer direkten religiösen oder ideologiekritischen Haltung durchgehalten, ist aber in verwandelter Weise in den allgemeinen Religionsbegriff, der sich gegenüber dem theologisch-dogmatischen immer mehr durchsetzte, eingegangen.

Im 19. Jh. war es Feuerbach, der den religiöskritischen Geist repräsentierte, aber jetzt in einer von der Hegelschen Dialektik geschulten Weise. Seine Wirkung war allerdings, rückblickend gesehen, auf die philosophische Religionskritik, insbesondere die des Marxismus, beschränkt. Auf die junge RW hatte sie einen kaum merklichen Einfluß; sie zehrte von dem Erbe Herders und Schleiermachers, was die Religionsphilosophie anbelangte, ohne zu begreifen, daß es gerade diese Religionsauffassung (des Herzens, Gemüts, Gefühls, der

⁴² Vgl. K. Rudolph, Die Religionsgeschichte an der Leipziger Universität und die Entwicklung der Religionswissenschaft, Berlin 1962 (Sitz. Ber. d. Sächs. Akad. d. Wiss. Philol.-hist. Kl. 107:1), S. 41ff.

⁴³ G. Stephenson, Geschichte und Religionswissenschaft im ausgehenden 18. Jh., in: *Numen* XIII, 1966, S. 43-79.

⁴⁴ Vgl. dazu K. Feiereis, Die Umprägung der natürlichen Theologie in Religionsphilosophie, Leipzig 1965 (Erfurter Theol. Studien 18).

Phantasie) war, die Feuerbach zum Ausgangspunkt der Kritik gemacht hatte.⁴⁵ Die ideologiekritischen Ansätze und der anthropologische Ausgangspunkt bei Feuerbach hatten auf die Rw keinen Einfluß, dafür schwamm sie viel zu sehr noch im offiziell theologischen Fahrwasser. Sie hatte sich allerdings eine kritische Funktion bewahrt, die sich aus ihrer von Haus aus eigenen Toleranz, Universalität (Vergleichung!) und allgemeinen Religions- und Gottesauffassung ergab. Es war der vor allem bei Max Müller sichtbare Zug, eine Rw zu entwerfen, die sich selbstständig neben den anderen jungen geisteswissenschaftlichen Disziplinen sehen lassen konnte, und die sich nicht als eine bloße theologische oder religionsphilosophische Abteilung verstand. Die von ihr mit Hilfe ihrer Schwesternwissenschaften ausgeübte historisch-philologische Methode gelangte zu ungeahnter Meisterschaft auf dem Gebiet der Religionsgeschichte und gab auf diesem Felde einen bis heute wirkenden Beweis für ihre Fähigkeit kritisch zu arbeiten. Diese kritische Verfahrensweise, die zunächst auf dem nichtchristlichen religionsgeschichtlichen Gebiet Blüten trieb, wurde in Gestalt der "Religionsgeschichtlichen Schule" auch im christlich-theologischen Raum wirksam, wobei sich die dabei sichtbaren kritischen Ambitionen bis in ideologiekritische Ansätze verwandelten (Christentum als besondere Form ohne Absolutheitscharakter).

Das 20. Jh. ist für die Rw eine Periode, die in erhöhtem Maße soziologische und psychologische Fragestellungen für sie einbrachte. É. Durkheim und M. Weber sind recht einflußreiche Denker auch für sie gewesen. Hatte im 19. Jh. die Ethnologie und Philologie weithin das Feld beherrscht, so waren es jetzt Psychologie und Soziologie. Mit ihnen zog auch ein verstärkter ideologiekritischer Geist wieder in sie ein, nicht in pragmatischer Weise wie im 18. Jh., sondern eben mit psychologischem und soziologischem Tenor.⁴⁶ Die ideologiekritischen Debatten der 20er Jahre (Scheler, Mannheim)

⁴⁵ Vgl. H.-J. Braun, *Die Religionsphilosophie L. Feuerbachs*, Stuttgart 1972, bes. S. 24f, 87ff, 124ff.

⁴⁶ Einen kurzen Einblick davon vermittelt die Dokumentation bei J. Waardenburg, *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion*, Vol. I, The Hague-Paris 1973, S. 300ff (Durkheim, Mauss, Levy-Bruhl, Weber, Freud). Vgl. auch C. Elsas (Hrsg.), *Religion. Ein Jahrhundert theologischer, philosophischer, soziologischer und psychologischer Interpretationsansätze*, München 1975 (Theol. Bücherei 56).

hatten zwar keine unmittelbare Nachwirkung in der Rw gehabt, desto mehr beginnt sie es aber in der Gegenwart zu haben, wozu meine Ausführungen einen Beitrag leisten wollen. Der Ertrag, der sich daraus ergibt, ist für das Selbstverständnis und die (relative) Selbständigkeit der Rw von ausschlaggebender Wichtigkeit, denn die zurückgewonnene kritische Haltung zu ihrem Gegenstand, den religiösen Überlieferungen und Deutungssystemen und die damit eingeleitete Be seitigung von Vorurteilen wird dazu beitragen, sie aus der theologischen und missionswissenschaftlichen Umklammerung (sichtbar bis in den Universitäts- und Studienbetrieb), in die sie teilweise geraten ist, zu befreien. Direkt und indirekt hat die Rw bis in die Gegenwart wiederholt der Selbstbegründung des Christentums gedient, oder sie bemühte sich, streckenweise einer allgemeinen religiösen Bewußtseinslage im Sinne einer anzustrebenden "Menschheitsreligion" gerecht zu werden bzw. sie gar zu fördern (R. Otto, F. Heiler). Die letzten internationalen Kongresse für Religionsgeschichte sind immer wieder mit diesem Problem konfrontiert worden. Nur dank der leitenden Gremien der IAHR und der überwiegenden Mehrheit ihrer Mitglieder ist ein Abgleiten in einen Religionskongress bisher verhindert worden. Um dies auch in Zukunft zu gewährleisten und die Autonomie der Rw zu fördern, ist es m.E. notwendig, neben der Herausarbeitung ihrer methodischen Eigenheiten⁴⁷ auch ihre religions- bzw. ideologiekritische Funktion wieder zu beleben.

III.

Damit sind wir unmittelbar zu den *Aufgaben der religionswissenschaftlichen Ideologiekritik* gelangt, die es jetzt zu skizzieren gilt. Ich sehe sie vor allem auf 5 Ebenen wirksam werden:

1. In der Überlieferungs- (Traditions-)Kritik, die in allen religionshistorischen Untersuchungen implizit enthalten ist; sie sollte mehr als bisher auch als bewußter Beitrag der Rw zur allgemeinen ideologiekritischen Diskussion herausgestellt werden (vgl. 2 u. 3).

2. In der "aufklärerischen" und emanzipatorischen Wirkung dieses eben genannten Beitrages auf das teilweise noch stark verfestigte ("orthodox-dogmatische") Selbstverständnis der gegenwärtigen Religionen. Die "Fremderkenntnis", sollte hier zugleich zur "Selbster-

⁴⁷ Vgl. dazu meine Ausführungen in: Das Problem der Autonomie (s.o. Anm. 27).

kenntnis" verhelfen. Zum "Wesen der geschichtlichen Wissenschaften" gehört, wie H.-G. Gadamer es formuliert, "innere Durchdringung kritischer Aufklärung, die die naive Fortgeltung von Überlieferungen kritisiert, und fortwirkender Tradition, die den geschichtlichen Horizont mitbestimmt".⁴⁸ Die der religionswissenschaftlichen Arbeit implizite Komponente der Reflexion ist ein nicht zu unterschätzender Faktor bei der Herausbildung und Förderung kritischen Denkens. "Die konkrete, historische Signatur wird mittels der ideologiekritischen Zurüstung der Reflexion an den reflektierten Gegenständen transparent".⁴⁹

3. In der Untersuchung, d.h. kritischen Analyse der wechselvollen Verflechtung von "Religion" und "Politik", "Thron und Altar", vor allem im Hinblick auf die vielfältigen religiösen Herrschaftsideo-logien in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart, die der Manipulation der Religion dienstbar gemacht worden sind.⁵⁰

4. In der Verfolgung und historischen Nachprüfung der Gedanken von K. Marx über die Religion einerseits als "Opium des Volkes", andererseits als "Protestation gegen das wirkliche Elend".⁵¹ An Hand eines solchen Leitfadens lassen sich gewisse Einsichten in die Bedeutung und operative Verwendung religiöser Vorstellungen gewinnen (Religion und Wirtschaft, Religion und Gesellschaftsstruktur; Eschatologie, Apokalyptik und Heilserwartung).

5. In der notwendigen Ausweitung des Arbeitsgebietes der Rw auf pseudo- krypto- und parareligiöse Bewegungen, den "religiösen Untergrund in unserer Welt", wie der Untertitel eines sich mit diesen

⁴⁸ In: Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik (s.o. Anm. 16), S. 300. Vgl. oben S. 10 über Ideologiekritik als Vorurteilskritik. Die emanzipatorische Funktion der Geschichtswissenschaft wird von H.-U. Wehler betont (Geschichte als Historische Sozialwissenschaft, Frankfurt/M.: edition suhrkamp 650, 1977, S. 27f.).

⁴⁹ R. Bubner, in: Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik, S. 220.

⁵⁰ Ein vorzügliches Beispiel dafür liefert der Beitrag von H. Cancik, Christus Imperator. Zum Gebrauch militärischer Titulaturen im römischen Herrscherkult und im Christentum, in: H. von Stietencron (Hrsg.), Der Name Gottes, Düsseldorf 1975 (Patmos-Paperback), S. 112ff. "Die Kritik der 'göttlichen Gewalt' bleibt eine der wichtigsten Aufgaben der Religionswissenschaft" (126). Vgl. auch E. Peters u.E. Kirsch, Religionskritik bei Heinrich Heine, Leipzig 1976 (Erfurter Theol. Schriften 13), bes. S. 101ff.

⁵¹ K. Marx/F. Engels, Über Religion, Berlin 1958, S. 10 (2. Aufl. Berlin 1976, S. 99). Vgl. dazu W. Post, Kritik der Religion bei Karl Marx, München 1969, S. 157ff.; J. Kadenbach, Das Religionsverständnis von Karl Marx, München-Paderborn-Wien 1970, 176ff.

Phänomenen beschäftigenden Buches heißtt.⁵² Aus diesem Bereich ergibt sich, daß das "Problem der Religion" neue Formen annimmt, mit denen sich die Rw beschäftigen muß.⁵³ Mit Hilfe ihrer Methode und Erkenntnisfindung können diese Erscheinungen nicht nur historisch, traditionsgeschichtlich "erklärt", sondern auch als Ausdruck eines weltweiten Neuauflebens unterdrückter natürlicher Religiosität verstanden werden. Diese Analyse zeigt zugleich die von mir aufgezeigte emanzipatorisch-desillusionistische, eben ideologiekritische Wirkung.

Aus diesen Aufgaben erwächst der Rw nicht nur eine neue Dimension ihrer Arbeit, sondern auch eine große Verantwortung, vor allem in der sog. "Dritten Welt", die sich in einem tiefgreifenden Emanzipationsprozeß befindet, der sich auch auf die eigene Überlieferung erstreckt. "Die "Unmittelbarkeit der dogmatisch-normativen (institutionell festgelegten und sozial verbindlichen) 'Applikation' des Traditionsverständnisses, wie sie bis in die Aufklärungszeit hinein in Europa, und bis in die Gegenwart hinein in den meisten außereuropäischen Kulturen, funktionierte", urteilt K. O. Apel mit Recht, kann nicht wiederhergestellt werden".⁵⁴ Diese Kulturen "werden durch die für sie unvermeidliche Verfremdung ihrer eigenen Tradition auch sogleich auf die Tatsachen hingewiesen, daß geistige Sinndeutungen der Welt, z.B. religiös-moralische Wertordnungen, im engsten Zusammenhang mit den sozialen Lebensformen (den Institutionen) zu begreifen sind. Was sie daher vor allem suchen, ist eine philosophisch-wissenschaftliche Orientierung, welche das hermeneutische Verständnis der eigenen und fremden Sinn-Traditionen durch soziologische Analysen der jeweils zugehörigen Wirtschafts- und Gesellschaftsordnungen vermittelt. Dies vor allem macht die Faszinations-

⁵² F. W. Haack, Von Gott und der Welt verlassen, Düsseldorf 1974. Weitere Literatur zu diesen Phänomenen: M.-D. Marsch, Plädoyer in Sachen Religion, Gütersloh 1973; G. Lanczkowski, Die neuen Religionen, Frankfurt/M. 1974; E. Benz, Neue Religionen, Stuttgart 1971; H. Reller, Handbuch religiöser Gemeinschaften, Gütersloh 1976.

⁵³ Vgl. bereits die Untersuchungen von G. Stephenson, Zum Religionsverständnis der Gegenwart, in: Ztschr. f. Religions- u. Missionswiss. 60, 1976, S. 181-216 und R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, Beyond Tradition and Modernity, London 1976 (Jordan Lectures 1974).

⁵⁴ In: Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik (s.o. Anm. 16), S. 35.

kraft des Marxismus für die Intellektuellen der Entwicklungsländer verständlich".⁵⁵

In dieser Situation kann die Rw eine Hilfe bei der Gewinnung eines neuen kritisch-reflektierten Verhältnisses zur weithin stark religiös geprägten Tradition sein. Denn, um Apel noch einmal zu zitieren, "Traditionsvermittlung muß zu einem komplizierten, wissenschaftlich vermittelten Prozeß werden, sobald die, wenn auch nur provisorische, Objektivierung und Distanzierung des zu verstehenden Sinnes durch hermeneutische Abstraktion von der normativen Geltung möglich geworden ist".⁵⁶

Weiterhin ist m.E. allein durch die angedeutete, von der religionswissenschaftlichen Arbeit eingeleitete kritische Relativierung der religiösen Bekenntnisse und Überlieferungen ein Abbau gegenseitiger Vorurteile und Mißverständnisse möglich. Insofern hat die religionswissenschaftliche (historische, philologische, soziologische, psychologische) Kritik auch eine durchaus positive Bedeutung für das Zusammenleben der Menschheit: sie fördert Verständnis, Toleranz und gegenseitige Anerkennung auf dem Boden eines gleichen Zuganges zur nicht unbesehen hingenommenen Tradition. "Kultur und Wissenschaft können den Menschen sowohl von seiner natürlichen, unkultivierten Umwelt befreien, wie auch ... aus seiner Versklavung durch seine eigene Irrationalität".⁵⁷

Es ist bemerkens- und sehr begrüßenswert, daß gerade auch von theologischer Seite in letzter Zeit zu diesen Fragen Weiterführendes gesagt worden ist. Hans Küng hat in seinem bekannten Buch "Christ sein" einen Abschnitt über die "Herausforderung der Weltreligionen" geschrieben, der für mich zu den herausragendsten, besten Äußerungen gehört, die in letzter Zeit zu diesem Thema von Seiten eines engagierten christlichen Theologen vorgetragen worden sind.⁵⁸ Es geht mir aber jetzt nicht primär um das von echtem christlichem To-

⁵⁵ Ebd. S. 37.

⁵⁶ Ebd. 35. Eine Stimme zu dem anvisierten Problem "3. Welt und Rw" ist z.B. G. O. M. Tasie, Africans and the Religious Dimension. An Appraisal, in: Africana Marburgensis IX, 1, 1976, S. 34-70. Verwiesen sei auch auf das bekannte Buch von J. S. Mbiti, Afrikanische Religion und Weltanschauung, Berlin 1974.

⁵⁷ Uriel Tal, in: Concilium 10, H. 10 (Okt. 1974), S. 607 im Zusammenhang der jüdisch-christlichen Debatte.

⁵⁸ München/Zürich 1974 (2. Auf.), S. 81-107 (A III).

leranzdenken getragene Verständnis für die anderen Religionen, das Küng zum Ausdruck bringt, sondern darum daß hier an “eine unvoreingenommene sachlich arbeitende Religionsgeschichte, Religionsphänomenologie, Religionspsychologie, Religionssoziologie und Religionstheologie” appelliert wird, die zu einer ernsthaften Auseinandersetzung zwischen Christentum und den nichtchristlichen Religionen provozieren kann.⁵⁹ Küng weiß um die “geistige Unbeweglichkeit” und Abkapselung der fremden Religionen, die sich der “völlig neue(n) Form von Bewußtsein”, des “unumgängliche(n) Säkularismus”, die beide mit den ökonomischen und gesellschaftlichen Veränderungen unseres Zeitalters in diese außereuropäischen Länder Einzug gehalten haben, noch nicht voll bewußt geworden sind. Dafür zeugen die ungenügenden Antworten, die von ihnen darauf oftmals gegeben werden. Küng lässt es aber nicht bei dieser Feststellung, sondern gibt im Sinne der “helfenden Diagnose” einige Punkte an, die einer kritischen Reflexion (K. nennt den Islam, Buddhismus, Hinduismus, Dschainismus, Konfuzianismus) bedürfen (wobei er übrigens — und das zeichnet sein selbstkritisches Bemühen aus — in diese Fragen auch das Christentum einbezieht): Ungeschichtlichkeit (Fehlen eines historisch-kritischen Denkens), zyklisches Denken, der daraus resultierende Fatalismus und Pessimismus, Weltlosigkeit, Passivität, Kastengeist, soziales Desinteresse, Traditionalismus.⁶⁰ Dies sind die Tatsachen, die die Rw schon länger zur Kenntnis genommen hat, sie oft aber nur als Objekt ihrer Untersuchungen mit teilweise unkritischer Bewunderung betrachtete. Dies sollte sich im Anblick der gegenwärtigen industriellen, wirtschaftlichen und politischen Prozesse gründlich ändern und zu dem von mir anvisierten “ideologiekritischen” Verhältnis der Rw zu ihrem Gegenstand verhelfen. Sie will nicht mutwillig zerstören, aber sie weiß von ihrem Ursprung und ihrer Sache her, daß Religionen, ihre Formen und “Ideologien” immer einem Wandel ausgesetzt waren, der von den Ursachen her nicht aufzuhalten war und sein wird. Es gibt religiöse Traditionen und Formen, die überlebt sind und deren Beibehalten bzw. Fortexistenz kein Gewinn, sondern Verhängnis und Verlust an Schöpfertum, ja einer neuen Identitätsfindung hinderlich sein können. Das Ethos wissenschaft-

⁵⁹ Ebd. S. 97.

⁶⁰ Ebd. S. 98-102.

licher Wahrheitssuche lässt für die *Rw* die Autorität des "Heiligen" zwar in der kritischen Reflexion "untergehen" (im Hegelschen Sinne), aber sie hat ein Maß an Achtung für eine durch das Feuer der Kritik gegangene und erprobte Religiosität, die dem Forscher selbst eignen kann.

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ESQUISSE D'UNE PHÉNOMÉNOLOGIE DU MONACHISME *

Dans un article paru en 1972, dans les *Recherches de science religieuse*, j'ai essayé de montrer que l'idéal monastique, considéré dans ses origines, a des liens étroits avec la vertu fondamentale de l'éthique judéo-chrétienne, la simplicité, *haplotês*¹⁾. Le *monachos* est parent de celui que l'on qualifiait de *haploûs*, c'est-à-dire de celui qui n'est pas *dipsuchos*, qui n'a pas l'âme double: c'est donc celui qui évite de se partager dans ses activités, qui met l'unité dans sa vie, se consacrant tout entier au service de Dieu. Cet idéal, enraciné dans la Bible — ne pas avoir „un coeur et un coeur”, un double coeur, mais servir Dieu d'un coeur entier —, a rejoint une théorie, elle d'origine hellénique, platonicienne et néoplatonicienne, largement développée dans la gnose, la théorie de l'unification: unification, éloignement de toute multiplicité et de toute dispersion, requis de celui qui veut s'unir à l'Un.

Je ne veux pas aujourd'hui reprendre ni poursuivre l'enquête sur le plan historique, non plus chercher à démêler la part qu'il convient de faire, dans l'idéal monastique ainsi considéré, respectivement aux influences judéo-chrétiennes et aux influences philosophiques et helléniques, voire gnostiques, encore moins m'engager dans le difficile problème des implications historiques qu'ont eues entre elles ces deux traditions.

Mon point de vue est, aujourd'hui, plutôt de caractère phénoménologique: étudier le monachisme en lui-même, comme phénomène religieux, à partir de ce qui en est, selon moi, l'élément fondamental, essentiel, à savoir la recherche de l'unité, le refus de tout partage en sa vie et en ses activités, puis montrer comment, à partir de cette donnée de principe, s'expliquent, comme par une sorte de logique, ou mieux d'exigence, interne, tous les autres éléments constitutifs du monachisme, ce que j'appelle les démarches monastiques fondamentales, notamment le célibat, le renoncement, l'anachorèse.

*) Texte d'une communication présentée au XIII^e Congrès international d'histoire des religions, Lancaster, août 1975.

1) Tome 60, numéro spécial sur le *Judéo-Christianisme*, p. 199-218.

On fait habituellement commencer le monachisme avec l'anachorétisme, c'est-à-dire du jour où dans la seconde moitié du IIIe siècle, un ascète, saint Antoine ou un Paul ermite avant lui, gagne la solitude du désert. Mais quelle qu'ait pu être alors l'ampleur du mouvement anachorétique — telle et si soudaine que l'on a pu croire qu'il s'agissait d'un commencement absolu —, ce n'est là qu'une manifestation secondaire d'un phénomène préexistant. Il y a, en effet, un monachisme préexistant au monachisme anachorétique, un pré-monachisme si l'on veut: mais celui qui le pratique s'appelle déjà un *monachos*, en syriaque *iħidāyā*, comme le montrent les attestations les plus anciennes, antérieures au IVe siècle, de ces termes, du mot syriaque surtout, plus largement attesté, à haute époque, que son homologue grec.

Or ce qu'a désigné d'abord le mot *monachos*, le syriaque *iħidāyā* — le fait est bien établi —, c'est l'ascète célibataire, le fidèle qui vit „seul”, si l'on veut, par quoi il faut entendre, non pas dans la solitude du désert, mais sans femme. Le „moine”, c'est d'abord cela, historiquement, mais aussi, peut-on dire, phénoménologiquement: sans célibat, pas de moine! Et c'est là une donnée, non seulement primordiale, mais constante. Au IVe siècle, quand le mouvement anachorétique est en pleine expansion, Evagre, anachorète lui-même et qui écrit surtout pour des moines qui vivent seuls au désert, quand il définit l'idéal monastique, met en premier lieu le célibat. Ainsi commence son traité des *Bases de la vie monastique*: „Il est dit dans Jérémie (il s'agit de Jér. 16, 1-4: mais le texte est sollicité!): ‘Tu ne prendras pas de femme en ce lieu, car ainsi parle le Seigneur au sujet des fils et des filles qui naissent en ce lieu: ils mourront de maladies mortelles’. Tel doit être le moine, s'abstenant de la femme, ne procréant ni fils ni filles . . .”²⁾.

Et pourquoi le moine ne se marie-t-il pas? Evagre nous le dit aussitôt en citant le chapitre 7 de la Ière Epître aux Corinthiens (versets 33 et suivants). C'est là, en effet, un texte essentiel pour qui veut comprendre la vraie nature du célibat monastique: „Je veux que vous soyez sans soucis (*amérimnous*: nous retrouverons ce mot!). Or celui qui n'est pas marié se soucie des choses du Seigneur et de la manière dont il plaira au Seigneur; mais celui qui est marié se soucie du monde et de la manière dont il plaira à sa femme, et il est partagé (*méméristai*: autre mot important!)”. Il en est de même pour la femme. Et un peu

2) § 1, Migne, P.G. 40, 1252 D-1253 A.

plus loin (verse 35): „Je vous dis cela pour votre bien, . . . pour que vous soyez empressés et assidus auprès du Seigneur, sans distractions” (*apérispastôs*: nous retrouverons aussi ce terme, souvent repris, de façon significative, dans la littérature monastique). Le choix qui est fait du célibat est donc justifié, non par l’idée que le mariage est mauvais (tout le contexte montre bien que telle n’est pas l’idée de l’Apôtre), mais par la conviction que seul le célibat permet de servir le Seigneur sans partage, „d’un cœur entier”, pour reprendre l’expression vétéro-testamentaire³). Certes, la tradition ascétique chrétienne a été parfois, aux IIe et IIIe siècles, contaminée par le dualisme et le mariage condamné comme impur, notamment en Syrie et en Mésopotamie, comme on le voit en particulier dans les *Actes de Thomas*. Mais tel n’est pas le motif réel du célibat monastique: celui-ci est fondé sur la „monotropie” (*monotropos* se trouve comme équivalent de *monachos*), c’est-à-dire sur la volonté d’avoir une vie unifiée, non partagée, toute au service du Seigneur.

Comme argument parénétique, plutôt que justificatif, en faveur du célibat, la littérature ascétique et monastique a largement utilisé un lieu commun de la sagesse hellénistique, un thème familier à la diatribe cynico-stoicienne: celui des embarras du mariage. L’argument vaut ce qu’il vaut, mais du moins met-il bien en relief l’idée essentielle: le mariage est source de soucis — je veux que vous soyez *amérimnoi*, disait l’Apôtre —, il introduit dans la vie de l’homme la division et le partage: aussi celui qui veut être tout à Dieu doit-il s’en abstenir.

Cette même idée essentielle, nous allons la retrouver en étudiant ce qui est aussi une démarche monastique fondamentale: le renoncement, *apotagē* ou *apotaxis*. Démarche fondamentale, dis-je, en ce qu’elle définit elle aussi l’état monastique: *renuntiantes*, *apotaktikoi* sont des termes qui ont servi à désigner les moines. D’une certaine manière, le célibat, le renoncement au mariage, à la famille, n’est qu’un aspect particulier, encore que fondamental, d’un renoncement plus général, total, qui est le renoncement au monde et à tout ce qui constitue la vie séculière.

Le théoricien par excellence de l’*apotagē* est saint Basile. Le chapitre VIII de ses *Grandes règles* répond à la question suivante: „S’il faut

3) Même idée, avec recours également au texte de saint Paul, chez saint Basile, *Grandes règles*, V, Migne, P.G. 31, 920 CD.

d'abord renoncer à tout et s'engager alors dans le genre de vie qui est selon Dieu". Le renoncement est ainsi défini: le moine „renonce à tous les attachements du monde qui peuvent faire obstacle au but de la piété”⁴⁾. „Faire obstacle”: voilà la vraie raison du renoncement. Quand saint Antoine, se convertissant à la vie ascétique, distribue aux gens de son village tous les biens et les terres qu'il a hérités de ses parents, c'est sans doute pour suivre le conseil évangélique qu'il a entendu lire un jour à l'église: „Si tu veux être parfait, va, vends tout ce que tu as et donne-le aux pauvres” (Matth. 19, 21); mais c'est aussi, nous assure son biographe, Athanase d'Alexandrie, „pour que ces biens ne soient pas pour lui une cause de tracas”⁵⁾. Tel est le motif le plus profond pour lequel le moine doit renoncer aux biens de ce monde, parce qu'ils sont une source de soucis et de tracas, et que le moine, pour être tout à Dieu, doit n'avoir aucun autre souci, être dans l'*amérinna*. Ce lien entre l'*amérinna*, l'absence de soucis, et l'*apotagē* est bien marqué par Basile lui-même dans une de ses lettres, où il rapporte sa propre expérience: „J'avais lu l'Evangile, dit-il, et j'y avais observé qu'un moyen très efficace d'atteindre à la perfection était de vendre ses biens, d'en partager le produit avec des frères pauvres, d'être complètement affranchi des soucis de cette vie et de ne permettre à aucune complaisance de tourner notre âme vers les choses d'ici-bas . . .”⁶⁾. C'est la raison pour laquelle aussi les ascètes itinérants dont le *Livre syriaque des degrés* décrit le genre de vie, renoncent d'un coup à tout ce qu'ils possèdent et cessent tout rapport avec „le commerce de ce monde”; s'ils n'y renonçaient pas, en effet, explique l'auteur anonyme, ils seraient „embarrassés”, „entravés”; en conséquence, ils ne pourraient pas recevoir l'Esprit et devenir parfaits⁷⁾. Le renoncement au monde est donc justifié par le fait que le commerce du monde est une entrave pour qui veut devenir parfait.

Evagre, après avoir, comme nous l'avons vu, posé au principe de la vie monastique le célibat, invite aussitôt après le moine au renoncement: „Bien plus, dit-il, le moine doit être un soldat du Christ, im-

4) *Ibid.*, 933 D-936 B.

5) *Vita Antonii*, § 2, Migne, P.G. 26, 841 C-844 A.

6) Lettre 223, à Eustathe de Sébaste, éd. et trad. Courtonne, III (Paris, 1966), p. 10.

7) Homélie III, 1-2, éd. Kmosko, *Patrologia Syriaca*, III (Paris, 1926), col. 45-49; 10, col. 64-68; 14, col. 76-77.

matériel (c'est-à-dire dégagé de la matière), sans souci (*amérimnos!*), séparé de toute pensée pratique et de toute action, comme l'Apôtre le dit: ‘Personne, quand il est soldat, ne s'embarrasse des affaires de cette vie, afin de plaire à celui qui l'a enrôle’ (II Tim. 2, 4)⁸⁾. Je pourrais citer encore, parmi bien d'autres, l'auteur anonyme de l'*Historia monachorum in Aegypto*, qui conseille de quitter „les soucis corporels et terrestres”, lesquels „partagent (*mérizontai*) l'intellect” et font obstacle à la contemplation⁹⁾). C'est toujours la même idée qui revient: il faut renoncer à tout ce qui peut être un obstacle pour qui veut s'unir à Dieu, c'est-à-dire tout, hormis Dieu lui-même. C'est ce „tout”, hormis Dieu, que désigne le mot „monde”, dont on sait combien il est équivoque dans les textes chrétiens des premiers siècles.

Ici une précision s'impose, qui est d'importance. Le renoncement monastique présente des analogies évidentes avec le renoncement baptismal, analogies qui apparaissent jusque dans le rituel. Mais il y a entre les deux une différence essentielle. Le renoncement monastique, différent en cela du renoncement baptismal, n'est pas un renoncement au mal, à Satan. C'est un renoncement à quelque chose — ce quelque chose que désigne le mot „monde” — qui en soi est indifférent (*mésos*, selon la terminologie stoicienne), et qui n'est pas intrinsèquement mauvais, pas plus que n'est mauvais, nous l'avons vu, le mariage, auquel renonce le moine. Basile expose cela nettement au chapitre V de ses *Grandes règles*. L'auteur du *Livre des degrés* ne condamne pas le „commerce du monde”, auquel ne se dérobent pas ceux qu'il appelle les „justes”, c'est-à-dire ceux qui s'en tiennent aux „petits commandements” de l'Evangile; seuls ceux qui veulent devenir „parfaits” renoncent à tous leurs biens, et, d'une façon générale, au commerce, à toutes les activités, du monde. Celui-ci n'est donc pas en lui-même mauvais; il n'est mauvais que dans la mesure où, ou, plus exactement, parce qu'il est un obstacle, un empêchement, pour qui veut parvenir à la perfection.

Pourquoi ces choses qui ne sont pas, par elles-mêmes, mauvaises, peuvent-elles donc être un obstacle et doivent-elles être par conséquent rejetées, comme si elles étaient mauvaises? C'est parce qu'il y a incompatibilité entre Dieu et le monde, ou, plus exactement, entre le

8) *Op. cit.*, § 2, 1253 C.

9) Recension grecque, I, 26, éd. Festugière (Bruxelles, 1961), p. 18.

service de Dieu et les activités de ce monde. „L'intellect, dit abba Isaïe, ne peut s'occuper de deux choses à la fois”. Et, d'une manière imagée: „De même qu'il n'est pas possible à quelqu'un de regarder d'un oeil vers le ciel et de regarder vers la terre de l'autre oeil, de même il n'est pas possible à l'intellect de s'occuper à la fois des choses de Dieu et des choses du monde”¹⁰). Et ailleurs: „Il est impossible à l'intellect d'avoir soin des deux à la fois (= de Dieu et du monde), comme le Seigneur l'a dit (Matth. 6, 24): 'Vous ne pouvez servir Dieu et Mammon'. Or Mammon, continue-t-il, cela signifie toute l'activité du monde. Si l'homme ne l'abandonne pas, il ne peut servir Dieu”¹¹).

Le moine ne renonce donc pas au monde parce qu'il le considèrerait comme mauvais. Il y renonce en raison de ce qu'il ressent comme une nécessité d'ordre psychologique: il lui paraît psychologiquement impossible de servir à la fois deux maîtres, le monde et Dieu. Il se refuse au partage, il veut unifier son activité et sa vie, orienter toute sa vie vers un but unique, *hena skopon echein*, comme le disent, entre autres, saint Basile et Sérapion de Thmuis, qui fut un ami de saint Antoine¹²). *Monachi omnis intentio in unum semper est defigenda*, écrit Cassien: „l'esprit du moine doit être tout entier et constamment tendu vers un but unique”¹³).

Considérons maintenant cette autre démarche monastique fondamentale, celle qui paraît d'ordinaire constitutive du monachisme proprement dit, tel qu'il est apparu à la fin du IIIe siècle, l'anachorèse. Nous allons retrouver ici, au principe, la même idée essentielle. Comment l'ascète, le *monachos*, selon le sens premier de ce mot, est-il devenu un anachorète, un *monachos*, au sens second et définitif de ce mot? C'est là, dans l'histoire du monachisme, un problème capital. Y a-t-il eu pure évolution interne, le *monachos* gagnant la solitude pour suivre les exigences de son idéal? Y a-t-il eu action décisive d'influences extérieures?

Certes, des causes économiques et politiques, depuis longtemps alléguées, ont pu intervenir dans cette pratique si étendue de l'anachorèse:

¹⁰) Logos 15, éd. Augoustinos (Jérusalem, 1911), p. 82 (= latin, P.G. 40, 1141 B).

¹¹) Logos 25, *ibid.*, p. 151 (= latin, *ibid.*, 1174 D).

¹²) Basile, *Grandes règles*, XX, P.G. 31, 973 A. Sérapion de Thmuis, *Lettre aux moines*, P.G. 40, 928 A.

¹³) *Conférences*, XXIV, 6, éd. Pichery (Paris, 1959), p. 176.

la fuite au désert lors de persécutions, non seulement en Egypte lors de la persécution de Dèce (tel serait le cas du premier ermite, Paul, selon saint Jérôme), mais aussi en Mésopotamie, où l'on connaît maints exemples de chrétiens se réfugiant dans les montagnes durant la longue persécution de Sapor II. On peut aussi alléguer la retraite au désert pratiquée, depuis fort longtemps, par les paysans égyptiens pour échapper aux exigences du fisc ou du service militaire... Mais ce ne sont là que des causes accidentelles; on ne saurait y voir le motif essentiel. L'anachorète, en réalité, s'explique fort bien comme un développement interne du phénomène monastique, à partir de ce que j'en ai défini comme l'élément fondamental.

Il est à noter d'abord que l'anachorète découle assez naturellement du renoncement, encore que celui-ci puisse se réaliser sous d'autres formes. Le renoncement doit être total, mais aussi effectif, matériellement réalisé: il convient de mettre une distance entre soi et ce à quoi on renonce. Cela apparaît nettement dans la *Vie d'Antoine*, où l'on saisit l'anachorète, pour ainsi dire, dans sa découverte progressive. Après avoir renoncé à ses biens, Antoine quitte sa maison et va s'établir à l'extérieur, mais non loin, du village, suivant en cela l'exemple d'autres ascètes: ainsi se matérialise, se réalise, son renoncement et se manifeste sa rupture avec la vie commune, sa volonté de ne plus participer désormais à la vie du village, à ses activités, le travail des champs et le reste. Cette démarche par laquelle le moine commence par quitter sa maison est caractéristique du monachisme universel; elle apparaît dans le monachisme indien, brahmanique ou bouddhique, comme dans le monachisme chrétien; elle est, par elle-même, retrait, „anachorète” et elle peut se développer sous la forme de la retraite au désert, dans une anachorète qui prendra de plus en plus d'ampleur: la vie d'Antoine est faite d'une série d'étapes anachorétiques qui le conduisent, des abords de son village, jusque dans son ermitage définitif, aux confins de la mer Rouge. Le moine qui a quitté sa maison peut aussi s'en aller vivre à l'étranger, dans un pays où il sera inconnu, méprisé et démunie de tout: c'est ce que l'on appelait la *xénitéia*, l'émigration ou dépaysement¹⁴⁾. Ou encore le moine, n'ayant plus désormais de maison, mène une vie perpétuellement errante, vagabonde,

14) J'ai consacré un article à ce sujet, *Le dépaysement comme forme d'ascèse dans le monachisme ancien*, dans *Annuaire de l'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes*, Ve Section, tome LXXVI, 1968-1969, p. 31-58.

comme celle des parfaits dont parle le *Livre des degrés* et dont il dit que, à l'instar de Jésus, ils n'ont pas „d'endroit où reposer leur tête”¹⁵⁾. Cette forme de monachisme itinérant, à laquelle on donnait aussi le nom de *xénitéia*, s'est répandue surtout parmi les chrétiens de Mésopotamie et de Syrie, race de commerçants; les moines égyptiens, pour la plupart d'origine paysanne, s'en défiaient quelque peu et lui préféraient la retraite au désert, l'anachorèse. Mais anachorèse et *xénitéia*, sous l'une ou l'autre forme, sont seulement des moyens différents de réaliser le détachement qu'exige le renoncement.

Mais l'anachorèse n'est pas seulement une suite, une réalisation pratique, du renoncement. Elle procède, elle aussi, de la même motivation profonde que ce dernier: la volonté qu'a le moine de se soustraire à tout partage, d'être un, pour se donner tout entier à Dieu.

Cela est fort bien illustré par la vie d'abba Arsène, telle qu'elle nous est connue par les *Apophthegmata*¹⁶⁾. Etant encore au palais de l'empereur Théodose, où il était un haut fonctionnaire, il entend une voix qui lui dit: „Arsène, fuis les hommes et tu seras sauvé!”. Il s'en va en Egypte, au désert de Scété, l'actuel Ouadi Natroun, et il s'établit d'abord à proximité des marais qui occupent le fond du ouadi, là où la plupart des moines avaient leur cellule. Mais, au désert, il entend la même voix: „Arsène, fuis les hommes！”, et il va demeurer plus loin, puis de plus en plus loin, de la partie habitée du désert. L'exemple d'Arsène montre bien, comme celui d'Antoine, que l'anachorèse n'est pas une démarche accomplie une fois pour toutes; elle doit être sans cesse recommencée, poursuivie, au désert même. A un jeune moine qui lui demandait: „Pourquoi nous fuis-tu? ”, Arsène fit cette réponse qui révèle le sens et le but qu'il donnait à son anachorèse: „Dieu sait que je vous aime, mais je ne puis être à la fois avec Dieu et avec les hommes” („je ne puis”: c'est bien cette impossibilité que ressentait, de son côté, abba Isaïe). Et Arsène continue: „Les milliers et les myriades d'en haut (c'est-à-dire les anges) ont une seule volonté, mais les hommes ont des volontés multiples. Je ne puis, dans ces conditions, abandonner Dieu pour suivre les hommes”.

Il y a, dans cette seconde partie de la réponse d'Arsène, un trait qui mérite d'être relevé: la mention des anges, qui, dit-il, n'ont qu'une

15) Homélie XV, début du § 13, éd. Kmosko, 365-368; cf. Matth. 8, 20.

16) Migne, P.G. 65, 88 B-108 D. Les textes cités sont les numéros 1, 2 et 13.

seule volonté. Nous rencontrons là un thème important, qui est celui du *bios angélikos*, la vie angélique, sur laquelle doit se modeler la vie du moine. Il ne s'agit pas là de ce que nous appelons communément l'angélisme, fondé sur le refus de la chair et le reniement de la condition humaine. Ce qui caractérise la vie angélique, c'est l'*amérimnia*, l'insouciance, ou mieux l'absence de soucis, dont je parlais tout à l'heure: les anges n'ont d'autre souci, d'autre volonté, que de servir Dieu. Ainsi doit tendre à devenir le moine, en surmontant toute forme de *dipsuchia*, de partage en son cœur.

Ce qu'Arsène recherchait en fuyant ainsi les hommes, au désert même, c'est ce que les textes monastiques appellent l'*hèsuchia*, c'est-à-dire le calme, la retraite, un état de vie où le moine n'est distract par rien, pas même, disait-il, par le bruit du vent dans les roseaux, par conséquent où il trouve les conditions les plus favorables au recueillement, à l'unification de son être. Quand il ne trouve plus ce calme dans le lieu où il s'est retiré, il gagne un autre endroit, plus éloigné, et c'est ainsi que l'anachorète se poursuit; elle pourra se continuer par la *xénitéia*, le moine gagnant un pays étranger où nul ne le connaît. Mais, là même, après un certain temps, il s'aperçoit parfois qu'il s'est acquis une nouvelle patrie, une nouvelle famille. S'il ne veut pas, ou s'il ne peut pas, fuir encore, il lui reste un autre moyen pour s'assurer l'*hèsuchia*: c'est de s'enfermer dans sa cellule et de vivre en reclus. Ainsi fit abba Isaïe, qui, après s'être retiré au désert, en Egypte, son pays — donc ayant pratiqué l'anachorèse —, gagna ensuite le sud de la Palestine — pratiquant alors la *xénitéia* —, et finit par vivre en reclus dans son monastère de la région de Gaza¹⁷⁾. Dans la tradition byzantine, le mot „hésychaste” a désigné tout aussi bien un moine reclus qu'un solitaire retiré au désert. Les formes de vie peuvent être diverses, mais le but poursuivi est toujours le même; ainsi s'expliquent les formes les plus étranges qu'a créées, en Orient, le monachisme: par exemple le stylisme, fort répandu en Syrie et dans la région de Constantinople: c'est une fuite, une séparation du monde selon la dimension verticale. De même qu'Antoine, en une série d'étapes, avait donné à son anachorète de plus en plus d'ampleur, de même vit-on saint Syméon faire exhausser, à plusieurs reprises, sa colonne. Ce qui

17) Voir sa Vie par Zacharie le Scolastique, conservée en syriaque, éd. Brooks, C.S.C.O. 7, p. 3-16, et (trad. lat.) 8, p. 3-10 (Paris, 1907).

importe, pour le phénoménologue, c'est de comprendre les exigences intérieures, les motivations profondes, toujours les mêmes, qui ont créé et développé ces formes diverses, parfois étranges, d'ascétisme.

Mais les moines savaient fort bien, par expérience, qu'il ne suffit pas d'avoir conquis, même au prix de renoncements héroïques, le calme extérieur, l'*hêsuchia*, pour jouir d'emblée du calme intérieur, de la paix de l'âme. Délivré des causes extérieures et matérielles de distraction, le moine a encore à se libérer des distractions que nourrissent en son esprit les pensées. C'est en cela que consiste principalement l'ascèse à laquelle doit se livrer le solitaire, ce qu'Evagre appelait la *praktikê*, qui est essentiellement lutte contre les pensées. Or cette ascèse intérieure est toute entière sous le signe de l'unification. Le but est de devenir, comme le dit Evagre, non seulement un „homme-moine”, c'est-à-dire quelqu'un qui a pu échapper à tout partage et consacrer sa vie à une seule fin, mais encore un „intellect-moine”, c'est-à-dire n'avoir plus désormais qu'une seule pensée, la pensée, ou, comme l'on disait, le „souvenir”, de Dieu¹⁸). Pour cela le moine doit arriver à triompher du vagabondage des pensées, qui, surtout à l'heure de la prière, ne cessent de le solliciter et de le distraire de l'unique pensée de Dieu. „Tant que ton intellect regarde de tous côtés au temps de la prière, tu ne pries pas encore en moine”, dit Evagre¹⁹). Aussi bien tous les renoncements qu'il s'est imposés en devenant moine n'ont-ils pas d'autre but: „Va, vends ce que tu as et donne-le aux pauvres, prends ta croix et renonce à toi-même pour que tu puisses prier sans distractions, *apérispastôs*”²⁰). Nous retrouvons ici, au terme, le mot-clé du chapitre 7 de la 1ère aux Corinthiens.

Je terminerai, pour illustrer cette idée, sur deux textes transmis l'un et l'autre sous le nom de Macaire l'Egyptien. Le premier est conservé dans un recueil copte: „Ce qu'il faut pour le moine qui est assis dans sa cellule (donc qui vit dans l'*hêsuchia*), c'est qu'il rassemble en lui-même son intellect loin de tous les soucis du monde, sans le laisser vagabonder dans les vanités de ce siècle, qu'il soit tendu vers un but unique, appliqué constamment à la pensée de Dieu seul, restant en lui à toute heure, sans distractions, ne laissant rien de terrestre troubler

18) *Antirrhétique* (version syriaque), prologue, éd. Frankenberg (Berlin, 1912), p. 474-475.

19) *De la prière*, 43, Migne, P.G. 79, 1176 C.

20) *Ibid.*, 17, 1172 A.

son cœur, ni pensée des choses charnelles, ni souci de ses parents, ni consolation de sa famille, mais que, dans son esprit et dans tous ses sens, il soit comme se tenant en présence de Dieu, afin d'accomplir en cela la parole de l'Apôtre qui dit: Afin que la vierge soit toute assidue auprès du Seigneur, dans une absence complète de distractions”²¹⁾.

L'autre texte provient des fameuses homélies du pseudo-Macaire et résume l'essentiel de ce que j'ai voulu dire: „Le moine doit son nom en premier lieu au fait qu'il est seul, puisqu'il s'abstient de la femme et qu'il a renoncé au monde intérieurement et extérieurement: extérieurement, en renonçant à la matière et aux choses du monde; intérieurement, en renonçant à leurs représentations mêmes, en n'admettant pas les pensées des préoccupations mondaines. Il est appelé moine, en second lieu, parce qu'il prie Dieu d'une prière ininterrompue, pour purifier son intellect des pensées multiples et adverses et pour que son intellect devienne moine en lui-même et seul devant le vrai Dieu, sans admettre les pensées du mal, mais demeurant constamment pur, comme il convient, et intègre devant Dieu”²²⁾.

Ainsi le monachisme apparaît comme un phénomène religieux ayant sa structure et sa consistance propres et qui s'est développé suivant les lois d'une logique purement interne. Les démarches fondamentales qui le constituent, ainsi que les formes diverses que ces différentes démarches ont pu revêtir suivant les temps et les lieux, procèdent, indépendamment des causes historiques qui ont pu occasionnellement intervenir, d'un principe toujours identique et en lequel il faut, je pense, reconnaître l'essence du monachisme, à savoir la volonté d'avoir une vie unifiée, soustraite à toute division.

J'ai étudié ce phénomène dans le domaine historique qui m'est familier et où je puis traiter les sources de première main. J'ai fait une large place, dans les origines de ce que je tiens pour l'idée essentielle du monachisme, au contexte culturel dans lequel le monachisme chrétien est né, à l'héritage juif et aux influences helléniques. Mais je suis persuadé que le phénomène monastique, en lui-même, échappe à ces contingences historiques et que l'idée essentielle qui en est le principe, la recherche de l'unité, répond à une exigence de la conscience

21) *Vertus de saint Macaire*, éd. Amélineau, *Annales du Musée Guimet*, XXV, Paris, 1894, p. 170-171.

22) Homélie 56, éd. Marriott, *Macarii Anecdota*, Cambridge, Mass., 1918, p. 44.

religieuse elle-même, qui, ailleurs, a pu s'exprimer en d'autres systèmes de pensée que ceux au sein desquels est apparu le monachisme chrétien.

Je n'ai pas compétence pour parler du monachisme indien et bouddhique. Mais les lectures que j'ai faites sur ce sujet, les conversations que j'ai eues avec des collègues indianistes ou bouddhologues m'ont amené à penser que l'on pourrait voir dans cette idée une donnée constante du monachisme en général²³⁾. Telle est du moins l'hypothèse que je soumets à ceux qui ont une connaissance familière de religions, autres que le christianisme, où le phénomène monastique est apparu.

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23) A titre de spécimen, je cite seulement ce passage d'un sūtra bouddhique traduit en chinois au début du VIe siècle, d'après D. T. Suzuki, *Essais sur le bouddhisme zen*, Paris, 1972, IIe série, p. 162 : „Si les fils et les filles de bonne famille désirent entrer en ce samâdhi de l'Unité, qu'ils s'assoient dans un endroit solitaire, abandonnant toutes pensées qui peuvent déranger, ne s'attachant pas aux formes et figures, qu'ils aient l'esprit fixé sur un Bouddha unique et se consacrent exclusivement à réciter son nom... „Ce texte n'est pas sans rappeler l'extrait que j'ai cité ci-dessus des *Vertus de saint Macaire*. Il est à noter que le monachisme chrétien oriental a connu, lui aussi, une technique de prière qui favorisait l'unification de l'esprit : la prière *monologistos*, consistant dans la répétition incessante du nom de Jésus. Elle est décrite en plusieurs passages de ce même recueil des *Vertus de saint Macaire* : les principaux sont cités dans mon article „The Jesus Prayer among the Monks of Egypt“, *Eastern Churches Review*, VI, 1974, p. 66-71.

MUSLIM FESTIVALS *)

I

There are many ways of discussing, analyzing or comparing festivals and a great amount of scholarly literature has been devoted to the construction of different kinds of typologies in this field: calendar festivals over against occasional celebrations; seasonal, agricultural and historical celebrations or magical and commemorative rites etc. Some scholars compared festivals according to their forms and contents (pilgrimages, sacrifices etc.). Yet one of the most rewarding types of analysis seems to be that of the specific "style" and character developed by individual religions, especially if we assume that the characteristics of a religion are reflected to a certain extent in its festivals. In Christianity we have for example the interesting contrast between the festival-oriented character of Catholicism and the anti-festival attitudes of most of the Protestant denominations. In Judaism, on the other hand, the cycle of festivals throughout the year conveys a most meaningful picture of Jewish history and thought. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the religious festivals of Islam and to try to answer the special questions they raise, because although Islamic religious culture as a whole is very rich and its rites most variegated, its festival culture is rather meagre. There are few festivals in Islam, and Muslim festivals seem to lack colour or meaning. Islam has only two official festivals ("al-^cĪdān"), and both are in fact only some kind of appendices to more important observances: ^cĪd al-Fitr concludes the Fast of Ramadān and ^cĪd al-Adhā the Hadjī rituals. This is why these observances themselves are sometimes incorrectly described as festivals¹.

The meagerness of Muslim festivals is very difficult to explain,

*) I am very grateful to my friends and colleagues R. Z. Werblowsky and S. N. Eisenstadt who helped me to see Muslim festivals in a broader context than Islam. The original Hebrew text of this article will appear in Hebrew in the "D. Z. Baneth Memorial Book", The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1977.

1) See for example G. E. von Grunebaum's — *Muhammadan Festivals*, New York 1951, in which he deals extensively with the Fast of Ramadān, The Pilgrimage, The Worship of the Prophet and Saints etc., but wherein he mentions only incidentally the two official festivals of Islam.

but it may have something to do with the severely monotheistic character of Islam and its constant fight against pagan phenomena and remnants of the pagan past. Muslim — just like Jewish — festivals are a pagan inheritance, and no suitable way may have been found to islamize them as, for example, the Ḥad̄idj rituals were islamized. The reason for this may be that to most religious communities festivals signify the necessity and permissibility of giving rein to natural impulses by merrymaking, dancing, drinking and the like. But, although the Prophet of Islam apparently recognized the need for festivals, these were relegated to the background, at least by theologians and jurists. Understandably enough, the ordinary folk could not put up with this situation and supplied what they missed by observing their own popular festivals and customs. Popular Islam thus adopted alien festivals, such as Nauruz, the Persian New Year, and the ancient Egyptian spring festival, which are observed to this day, and revived pre-Islamic festivals, such as the Night of the Middle of the Month of Sha'bān. (This trend is still flourishing in Islam. Thus for example the beginning of Muḥarram, the first month of the Muslim calendar, is assuming nowadays the character of Sylvester or New-Year's Day, a feature completely unknown in Muslim tradition). The most striking expressions of this development are the various "Mawlidīs", *i.e.* birth anniversaries and memorial days of prophets and local saints, which have mushroomed throughout the Muslim world, their customs and rejoicings spilling over on the official festivals²⁾. The most famous of them is the anniversary of the birth and death of the Prophet Muḥammad, on the 12th of Rabi' al-Awwal, the third month of the Muslim year³⁾. Despite the opposition of theologians the "Mawlid al-Nabī", probably introduced in the early 13th century, has become a kind of official festival, threatening to deprive the two official festivals of their privileged position. However, we shall deal here only

2) These popular festivals have been described and studied extensively. Cf. f.i. E. W. Lane — *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, ch. XXIV; J. W. McPherson — *The Moulids of Egypt*, Cairo 1941; M. Winter — "The Mawālid in Egypt from the eighteenth to the twentieth Century", in: G. Baer (ed): *The 'Ulamā and Problems of Religion in the Muslim World*, (Hebrew) Jerusalem 1971, pp. 79-103.

3) According to Muslim tradition Muḥammad (like Moses in the Jewish tradition) was born and died on the same day. He started his "Hidjra" from Mecca to Al-Madina on the same date as well.

with the latter two, the study of which seems to have been somewhat neglected hitherto.

II

Let us first investigate the characteristics of the two official Muslim festivals and their position according to religious law. Both are not mentioned in the *Qur'ān*. The Ḥadīth and later religious-legal literature usually mention them only at the end of books devoted to liturgical precepts (sometimes as appendices to the Ramaḍān and Ḥadj̄i rituals). Within this framework, there is, of course, no discussion of the festivals as such but only of the festival prayers. It would indeed seem that the public festival prayer and the sermon following it are the essence of Muslim festivals. But even though the festival prayer is certainly a salient feature of both festivals, it is not obligatory! The Muslim festival prayer is regarded as a desirable optional act ("Sunna"), whereas the five daily prayers are regarded as obligatory for every adult person ("Fard 'Ayn"). Of course, the festival prayer belongs to those optional acts which have become general practice, but it has not even been given the official designation of these ("Sunna Mu'aqqada"). Some jurists think that the festival prayer is an act obligatory on the whole community rather than a "Sunna", namely that those who perform it thereby release those who do not from the obligation ("Fard Kifāya"), just as, e.g., in the case of a holy war⁴). In any case, the festival prayer is not a religious duty in the same sense as the five prayers on weekdays or even as the public prayer on Fridays, which seems to have become obligatory mainly for political reasons. Moreover, its contents are not different from those of everyday prayers because Islam knows neither a daily nor a festival prayerbook (although it has evolved a rich, beautiful literature of optional prayers). Every prayer consists of several prayer units known as "*Rak'as*" (from the verb *raka'a* "to kneel") each of which includes several blessings, the recitation of the "Fatiḥa" (the short opening *Sūra* of the *Qur'ān* which is the principal prayer of Islam), as well as a bow and two prostrations, spells of sitting down and standing up, and traditional gestures. A festival prayer is constituted by adding two of those "*Rak'as*" to the ordinary weekday ones;

4) This idea prevails especially among the Ḥanbalite Doctors of Law. Cf. "Al-Fiqh 'alā Al-Madhāhib Al-Arba'a", Cairo 1928, p. 304 ff.

they are joined to the morning prayer (in contrast to the additional Friday "Rak^cas", which are joined to the midday prayer) and are performed in public, now mostly at the mosque.

As stated, an addition of two "Rak^cas" at public prayers is also made on Fridays, but an even closer parallel is the addition of two "Rak^cas" at special prayers, such as public prayers at a time of drought, prayers for rain, prayers during an eclipse of the sun or the moon, and the like. The Festival prayer, in contrast to the Friday prayer, has several more things in common with the special prayers. For example, it is not preceded by the call of the "Mu^cazzin"; there is no repetition (*Iqāma*)⁵ of this call at the beginning of the prayer inside the mosque; the sermon is given after the prayer and not before as on Fridays; and the prayer should not take place in the mosque but in the prayer plaza ("Muṣallā") at the entrance to the town. In the Ḥadīth and in religious-legal literature, the precepts concerning festival prayers usually occur next to those concerning special prayers, and some hold, therefore, that the Festival prayers preserve a very old Muslim prayer tradition reflected also in the special prayers recited at the time of a disaster or the threat thereof. As against this, the Friday prayer represents a more developed and more sophisticated stage of public prayer, instituted mainly in the 'Umayyyad period and perhaps under the influence of the Christian church prayer⁶). Later on the Friday prayer in its turn influenced the Festival prayer in various ways so that, *f.i.*, both are held nowadays inside the mosque rather than outside the town.

We thus find that the Muslim festival prayer is merely a desirable act, not a duty, and that in both content and form it is not really different from other prayers. Moreover, Muslim festivals are not periods of rest, just as the Muslims Friday is not a period of rest except for the actual hours of prayer (see Sura LXII, v. 9 and 10). Goldziher surmised Persian influence in this matter, in addition to the fact that to Muslims a day of rest commemorating the Creation was crude

5) Instead of the "Adhān" there is a shortened call to prayer (Al-Salāt Djāmi^catan"). On the "Iqāma" cf. E. Mittwoch — "Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Islamischen Gebets und Kultus", Verlag der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin 1913.

6) See C. H. Becker "Zur Geschichte des Islamischen Kultus", *Der Islam* III, 1912, pp. 374-419.

Jewish anthropomorphism, which they fought both in the Qur'ān and its commentaries, as well as in the Ḥadīth and anti-Jewish polemics. Thus, the Qur'ān says that the world was created in six or fewer than six (*i.e.* two) days and strongly denounced the idea of a seventh day as a day of rest. For example: "We created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in six days and no weariness touched us" (Sūra 50, v. 38). The commentators add that this verse "came down upon" the Jews who maintain that the world was created in six days and that "on the seventh day God rested and was refreshed, rose up and sat on His throne"⁷⁾.

What, then, are the characteristic of those two festivals? At *‘Īd al-Fitr*, one is enjoined to make a special charitable gift called "*Zakāt al-Fitr*". Every person who has a minimum sufficient for his livelihood must, on his own behalf and on that of the members of his household including his servants, make a donation for the feeding of the poor. It should preferably be made already before the festival, but it is undoubtedly a part of the latter and one of the few obligatory acts pertaining to it⁸⁾. At *‘Īd al-Adhā*, a family sacrifice called '*Qurbān*' is offered. As a matter of fact Islam does not really know of sacrificial rites and the sacrifice is more of a family meal. It is not considered obligatory except in the case of persons who have made a vow or have unintentionally sinned during the *Hadjdj*. But is a desirable act customarily performed by all Muslims, both pilgrims at the conclusion of the *Hadjdj* at Minā and the millions throughout the world who have not been vouchsafed to make the *Hadjdj*. A lamb or a sheep is usually sacrificed for an individual and a camel or an ox for a family group of seven persons. The meat is primarily intended for the poor, although it is deemed desirable that the offerer and his household partake of it as well. In our time, the sacrifice is usually replaced by almsgiving, though no official permission for this substitution has been given by religious scholars. There has even been

7) See f.e. Al-Zamakhshari's exegesis to this vers and cf. I. Goldziher — "Die Sabbatinstitution im Islam", Gedenkbuch David Kaufmann, Breslau 1900, pp. 86-102. Jewish sages also raised the question "Is God liable to weariness?"! in this connection. See *Mekhilta* on *Exodus* ch. 20 v. 11.

8) Some Doctors of Law do not regard this "*Zakāt*" as an obligation. Cf. "Al-Fiqh ‘alā Al-Madhāhib Al-Arba‘a", Cairo 1928, p. 599 ff. See also the details about this "*Zakāt*" donation in H. W. Juynboll, *Handbuch des Islamischen Gesetzes*, Leiden 1910, p. 109 ff.

explicit opposition to it even from modern-minded theologians⁹⁾, despite the enormous sanitary nuisance created by the sacrifice nowadays, when hundreds of thousands of pilgrims throng little Minā every year.

In sum, the main features of the two Muslim official festivals are prayer and charity, to which are added various popular customs, such as a festive meal, festive dress, visits to cemeteries and pilgrimages to the tombs of saints¹⁰⁾. Yet the festivals lack specific ritual observances and specific associations with the seasons of the year or with historical or religious events, this perhaps owing to the severely monotheistic puritan character of early Islam, as can be seen clearly from the following study of early Muslim traditions about the festivals.

III

Between the lines of traditional stories about Muḥammad and his companions, we glimpse a kind of basic opposition to festivals in Islam. It is connected especially with the personalities of the first two caliphs, Abū Bakr and ʻUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. ʻUmar is known in the Ḥadīth as a stern, inflexible monotheist (many have compared him to St. Paul); his surname is “the One with the Whip” because he would whip persons who, he thought, were not good Muslims. Many stories were told of his pure faith and his attempts to prevent remnants of earlier religions from clinging to Islam¹¹⁾. It is, of course, possible that he became a symbol in this as in other matters and that many utterances attributed to him really belong to a later period. Nevertheless, there may be an historical core to these stories: a group of early Muslims may have been more anxious than even the Prophet to preserve the early puritan character of their religion.

The most important story relevant in this context is one attributed to the Prophet’s young wife, ʻĀ’isha, which appears in all the canonical

9) See f.e. Maḥmūd Shaltūt (the late Rector of Al-Azhar University) — *Fatāwā*, Cairo n.d., p. 144 ff.

10) Cf. f.e. E. W. Lane — *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* ch. XXV.

11) Cf. for example his attitude towards the sanctity of Jerusalem or towards various rituals of the rituals of the *Hadjidī*. See my studies — “The Sanctity of Jerusalem in Islam” in Msgr. J. M. Oesterreicher and A. Sinai (eds.), *Jerusalem*, AAAPME, New-York 1974, p. 221, and — *The Religious Dialectics of the Hadjijī* (in Hebrew) — The Israel Academy of the Sciences and the Humanities, Jerusalem, 1976.

books of Ḥadīth: "One day, two bondwomen sang songs of the Ansār at my house on the Day of Bućāth, when Abū Bakr entered my house and said: 'Songs like the songs of Satan at the house of the Prophet! And that on a festival day!' (some texts are more specific, reading 'on the day of the Qurbān Festival'). The Prophet, thereupon, said to Abū Bakr: 'Lo, every people has its festival, and this is our festival'. "Variants of this story contain further particulars, such as that the bondwomen also played the tambourine or that the Prophet was present at the time of their singing but paid no attention to it, or averted his face, or wrapped himself up in his mantle, or the like, until Abū Bakr childed them¹²).

In this and other stories, the Prophet is represented as mild, conciliatory and, especially, understanding the minds of women and children. Thus we are told, *e.g.*, that his womenfolk were once chattering freely in his presence but that when ʻUmar came they quickly hid from him. ʻUmar sternly rebuked them, saying: 'O ye enemies of your own souls, are ye afraid of me and are not afraid of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah's prayer and blessing be upon him for peace?' The women replied that he was rougher and harsher than the Prophet, and the Prophet himself remarked: "By Allah, O ʻUmar, Satan will not meet thee without going out of thy way and turning another way"¹³). The theme of the Prophet's understanding the minds of women occurs also in another reference to festivals, in several variations of a story about black Ethiopian slaves. The latter would celebrate their festivals with dances in which they wielded spears and leather shields. ʻĀ'isha, actually still a little girl at the time, very much wanted to watch these celebrations, and the Prophet would hide her in the folds of his mantle to enable her to do so. ʻUmar appears in one of the versions chiding the dancers, but the Prophet silences him, saying: "Leave them alone, O ʻUmar!"¹⁴).

One fact emerges clearly from these stories: the Prophet realized the need for joy and for festivals inspiring joy, while some of his

12) Cf. Al-Bukhārī, *Sahīh* ed. Krehl, vol. I, p. 242 or Muslim, *Sahīh*, Cairo 1955, Book VII, p. 607 (Nr. 892). (Ansār — The Muslim inhabitants of Al-Madina; The Day of Bućāth — one of their pre-islamic days of victory).

13) Cf. f.e. Muslim, *ibid.*, Book IV, p. 1863 (Nr. 2396).

14) Muslim, *ibid.*, Book VII, pp. 608-610. See also A. J. Wensinck — *Arabic New-Year and the Feast of Tabernacles*, Amsterdam 1925, pp. 18-19.

associates abhorred celebrations dating from pre-Islamic days, which were held mainly by strangers¹⁵⁾. Some scholars, therefore, conclude that the two official festivals were prescribed as substitutes for pre-Islamic celebrations. The following is reported in the name of Anas ibn Mālik: "The people of the *Djāhiliyya* (the pre-Islamic period of Religious ignorance) had two days in the year on which they 'played', and when the Prophet, may God's prayer and blessing be upon him for peace, came to Al-Madina, he said: 'Allah has given you something better than these two days: 'Id al-Fitr and 'Id al-Adḥā' '¹⁶⁾.

Here we come to another motif frequent in Muslim tradition generally and in relation to festivals in particular. It is the motif "We, too, have this — and better" or "We, too, deserve this — and more than others". This motif occurs especially in relation to Judaism and Christianity and their prophets and festivals. Thus, *e.g.*, we are told in the name of 'Abdallah ibn 'Abbas, the Prophet's cousin, who was considered a great expert on Judaism and on problems of Islamic exegesis and law, that when the Prophet came to Al-Madīna he found the local Jews fasting on the Tenth of the First Month ("'*Āshūrā'*") and their women dressed up in honour of the occasion. When he inquired the reason of the fast and the festival, he was told: "This is the day on which God gave Moses victory over Pharaoh" or in another version: "On it God saved Moses and the children of Israel from the hands of Pharaoh and drowned Pharaoh and his people in the sea, and in memory thereof we fast". The Prophet thereupon said: "We have a better right to Moses than you", and he accordingly commanded the Muslims to fast on that day¹⁷⁾. Sayings expressing the

15) We know very little about Arab pre-Islamic festivals, as distinguished from pre-Islamic rituals such as the *Hadjidj*, *'Umrah*, *Sa'ī*, *Ramy* etc. Some descriptions of pre-Islamic festivals are based on retroprojected Muslim notions (See *f.e.* the descriptions of the '*Āshūrā'* in the *Hadīth* collections). Others which describe festivals of the early days of mankind may be closer to the actual *Djāhiliyya* customs. Cf. *f.e.* Al-Kisā'i, *Qīṣāṣ Al-Anbyā'*, ed. I. Eisenberg, vol. I, Leiden 1922, p. 87. See also Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat Rāsūl Allāh*, ed. Wüstenfeld, I, p. 37.

16) Al-Nasā'i, *Sunan*, vol. III, p. 149 (*Kitāb Ṣalāt Al-'Idayn*).

17) This explanation of the fast is unknown in Jewish tradition. It may be a Muslim explanation, but it may as well preserve an ancient Jewish tradition which prevailed among the Jews in Arabia. See also G. Vajda — "Jeûne Musulmane et Jeûne Juif" in *HUCA* 12-13, 1938, p. 374. For the Muslim tradition about '*Āshūrā'*, which was the first prescribed fast in Islam, see the canonical

young Islam's feelings of deprivation as it were and its need for compensation-feature even more strikingly in the *Hadīth* traditions about Friday. Thus, e.g., many versions of the following tradition, transmitted by Abū Hurayra, are ascribed to the Prophet: "We are the last (of the monotheistic religions), but we shall be the first on the Day of Judgment. Every nation received (its holy book) before us, and we received it (*scil.* ours) after them, but on this (weekly) day, which has been enjoined upon us, Allah has us take the lead, and people follow us in this matter: the Jews on the morrow (the Sabbath), the Christians on the next day (Sunday)"¹⁸.

Lastly, we might mention here another group of *Hadīth* traditions about the festivals. They express the notion that the Jews have a keener appreciation of festivals and are therefore worth imitating or, in other versions, that Islam is not inferior to Judaism in festival-mindedness. This group of stories is connected with the famous verse (*Sūra V*, 5), which reads: "This day have I perfected your religion for you, and have filled up the measure of my favours upon you: and it is my pleasure that Islam be your religion . . .". A *Hadīth* adduced by many commentators of this verse goes approximately as follows: "A Jew said: If this verse had descended upon us, we certainly would have fixed a festival on that day". To this, Ibn 'Abbās or 'Umar replied: "Verily, this verse descended upon us on a double festival day, viz. on 'Arafa Day (the most important day of the *Hadjdj*, when the congregation stands at the foot of the Mount of Mercy, listening to a sermon), which fell on a Friday . . ."¹⁹.

Of course, it is very doubtful whether these stories permit of any historical inferences, but they certainly point to an interesting,

collections of the *Hadīth*, usually at the end of the books on the fast of Ramaḍān. Some of these traditions try to blur the Jewish origin of the 'Āshūrā and tell about the same fast as part of the *Djāhiliyya* rituals.

18) Cf. Muslim, *ibid.*, "Kitāb Al-*Djum'a*. Other traditions express the same feelings, while describing the order of nations entering Paradise on the Day of Judgment ("We appeared last — but we shall enter first" etc.). The motif certainly evolved later than the earlier concept of Friday, which was perhaps chosen as a day of worship, in order to attract the Jews. Cf. S. D. Goitein — "The Origin and Nature of Muslim Friday Worship" in his "*Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*", Leiden 1966, pp. 111-125.

19) See f.i. Ibn Kathīr's commentary to the verse (Vol. II, p. 12-13). A very important detail in the various explanations to this verse, which should yet be studied thoroughly, is the attempt to put the word 'festival' ('Id') as an equivalent to the written word 'religion' ('Dīn').

essential feature of Islam: Muslim festivals did not grow organically; they do not commemorate events of its history or of the life of Muḥammad and his prophetic experiences (as does f.e. the Fast of Ramaḍān, see Sura II, 185). Adding to this the fact that Muslim festivals have no connection with the seasons of the year or with agriculture, such as sowing, reaping, fruit-picking or asking for rain, we note an emptiness in them which bears no proportion to the religious richness of Islam in general.

We ought to point out here that a few and rather late attempts have been made to connect at least one of the two festivals, the Feast of Sacrifice, which concludes the Ḥadīdī, with features of the Muslim past, viz. with Abraham and the Sacrifice of Isaac. As is well known, opinion in Muslim tradition is divided as to who is the anonymous "Al-Dhabih", mentioned as to be sacrificed by his father in the Qur'ān (see Sūra XXXVII, 97-113). Many of the early traditionists think that he is Isaac, but the prevailing view is that he is Ismael²⁰). However, what concerns us here is not this controversy but the fact that in various sources, e.g., in Qur'ān commentaries, especially on the aforesaid Sūra, and in the popular *Tales of the Prophets*, ('Qīṣāṣ Al-Anbiyā'), the Feast of Sacrifice becomes a kind of re-enactment of Abraham's role in the sacrifice of his son. The names of the three main days of the Ḥadīdī, are interpreted with reference to the sacrifice (and not, as customary, to the Ḥadīdī itself); this is done by using the very frequent method of name-interpretations as in Biblical literature. The first day is said to symbolize Abraham's uncertainty ('tarwiya-tarawī') as to whether the order to sacrifice his son comes from God or from Satan, the second his realization ('arafa') that the order comes from God, the third his decision to carry out the sacrifice ('nahṛ'); A rock ('Şakhra') at Minā seems to replace the foundation-stone in the Dome of the Rock, the locale of Isaac's sacrifice in Jewish tradition; the throwing of stones at Minā is linked in these interpretations, as usual, not only with Satan's enticement of Abraham, but also with Abraham's attempts to catch the ram (from Paradise) in order to sacrifice it instead of his son²¹).

20) Cf. Al-Kisā'i, *Qīṣāṣ Al-Anbiyā*, ed. I. Eisenberg, p. 150-151 and Al-Thālabī, *Qīṣāṣ Al-Anbiyā*, Cairo, n.d., p. 80 ff.

21) See, f.i. the commentaries of Ibn Kathīr and Al-Baīdāwī to the story in Sūra 37.

But all these explanations did not grow organically with the festival, but seem to be merely an extension of the original Islamic connection between Abraham and Ismael, and the Ka^caba with the rituals of Ḥad^jdj. Even more so, only in recent sermons and detailed Muslim scholarly discussion of the festivals of Islam as compared to other religions we find explicit statements to the effect that the ‘Īd Al-Qurbān’ was established in memory of Abraham’s readiness to sacrifice of his son ²²).

IV

It should be noted that the Shī‘a, the largest sect that seceded from orthodox Islam, which today makes up about ten per cent of Muslims in the world, mainly in Iran but also in Iraq and Lebanon, has an entirely different festival culture. Thus, e.g., ‘Āshūrā’ Day has assumed in the Shī‘ite world a character quite dissimilar from the bleak one it has in Sunnite Islam. In the latter, it has remained an optional fast day since the time the Fast of Ramaḍān was instituted. In the Shī‘a, it is the day of remembrance of the slaughter of Al-Ḥusayn and his family by the Umayyad army at Karbalā (October 10, 680), when the Shī‘ites unsuccessfully tried to restore ‘Alid rule. This day of mourning is commemorated with splendour and extraordinary intensity in the Shī‘ite world. It is marked by processions, ecstatic gatherings, dramatic re-enactments of Al-Ḥusayn’s sufferings and passion plays called *Ta‘ziya* (consolation), all manifesting the essential cultural difference between Shī‘a and Sunna. In the words of the late U. Heyd: “These processions are extremely different from the ceremonies of Sunnite Islam; they are the expression, not of a masculine religion that finds its truth confirmed by the success of its adherents in this world, but of the feelings of a persecuted sect whose experiences center upon the torments of a righteous man, the killing of a saint by the forces of evil” ²³). Yet the difference between Shī‘a and Sunna is perhaps much deeper even than that and may be discerned in the rejection by the monotheistic-puritan Sunnite orthodoxy of

²²) See f.e. Muṣṭafā Al-Tayr’s articles on the festivals in “Madjallat Al-Azhar”, of February 1971 and January 1972.

²³) Translated (from the Hebrew) from his article “Observations on the Religious Cultural Situation in Iran” in *The New East* (*‘Hamizrah Heḥadash*), Quarterly of the Israel Oriental Society, vol. VI, 1954/1955, p. 6.

certain, ancient, ceremonies and performances revived by the Shī'a (as by some Christian groups).

The Shī'ites have also festivals of their own, such as ‘Īd al-Ghadīr, which falls after the Ḥadīdīj, on the 18th Dhū al-Hidj̄da, the day on which, according to Shī'ite tradition, Muḥammad appointed ‘Alī his successor ('Wāsi') and they cultivate especially the pilgrimages to the graves of their saints, such as ‘Alī, Ḥusayn and the Imams. At the same time, they accept the official festivals and basic rites of Islam. Yet sometimes there arise difficult problems with regard to these, for example, with the visit to the tomb of the Prophet at Al-Madina, customary for those making the pilgrimage to Mecca. According to tradition, the Prophet's companions and heirs, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, are buried near him, but they are obnoxious figures, usurpers, in the eyes of the Shī'ites, who side with the ‘Alids. The Ḥadīdīj has thus at times been marred by tension, and even riots, arising from charges that Shī'ite pilgrims had desecrated the burial chamber of the Prophet and his companions²⁴⁾. However, the principal disputes between the Shī'a and the Sunna do not concern matters of ritual, and certainly not the festivals, but articles of faith originating in different attitudes towards the early history of Islam. For hundreds of years, attempts have been made to bring the Shī'a back into the orthodox fold, and these have concentrated on doctrinal matters rather than on the festival calendar²⁵⁾. This is in striking contrast to the attitude of Judaism for example, which lays particular stress on its festival calendar and has struggled hard to achieve its uniformity²⁶⁾. It seems that whereas

24) See f.e. R. Burton — *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Mecca*, Vol. I, London 1913, p. 321 and p. 431.

25) Cf. my study "Contemporary Religious Thought among the 'Ulamā of Al-Azhar" in: *Asian and African Studies* Vol. VII, 1971, pp. 231-232.

26) A famous story about Rabban Gamliel the second, head of the Sanherdin at the end of the first and beginning of the second Century, illustrates this clearly: One of the well known sages of his age, Rabbi Joshua, calculated the beginning of the new Jewish Year in a slightly different way from the head of the Sanhedrin, because he doubted the words of the witnesses who testified to have seen the new moon. Rabban Gamliel commanded him "to come to me with thy stick and thy money on the Day of Atonement, which shall fall in accordance with thy calendar" e.g. to behave on the holiest day of the Jewish Year as on a regular day of work... Rabbi Joshua accepted the command, though reluctantly, because he shared Rabban Gamliel's view and attached also extreme importance to one uniform calendar in Judaism. When he thus arrived at the latter's place he was received with the greatest honour and respect for what he had done.

in Judaism the festivals and the calendar have almost become the touchstone for determining a dissident sect, Islam treated and still treats the whole subject of the calendar and festivals rather casually — not only in relation to the Shī‘a. To this day, orthodox Islam has no uniform calendar or festival dates; the new moon is determined — much as in Judaism in the days of the Second Temple and for some time after its destruction — according to the testimony of eye-witnesses who are brought before the local ‘Qādī’. There may, therefore, be differences of one or two days — *e.g.*, as to the beginning and end of the Fast of Ramaḍān — between one region and another, not even very distant ones. True, the radio is today used as an auxiliary device, and Cairo Radio, *e.g.*, proclaims the beginning of the fast for a wide area. But orthodox Islam is still very far from accepting an astronomical calculation of the calendar and the festival dates, although voices advocating it are becoming more numerous nowadays²⁷⁾ resuming isolated Sunnite demands, made in this direction in the Middle Ages, (when the Ismā‘ilī Shī‘a already adopted it).

V

Let me sum up: Festivals, in general, seem to have inherent pagan, mythological characteristics, and these are usually expressed in dramatized rituals. The monotheistic religions tried to change this pattern or, at least, lend it new meanings either through the re-enactment of historical events (*e.g.*, the Jewish festivals) or through adding the human, personal aspect as in Christianity. But, the pure severe monotheism of Islam seems to have rejected any compromise in this respect. This may well explain the fact, that Islam did not really cultivate religious festivals. It may as well be the indirect reason for the growth of the popular Mawlid in Islam, cherishing as in Christianity and the Shī‘a, the factor of human mediation. The lack of any rituals or dramatization at the Muslim festivals may also explain why these festive days are to be considered often as being liable (*e.g.*, through sermons at the mosque) to political or other incitement of the crowds, who search after new contents for their feasts.

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27) See my “Contemporary Religious Thought among the ‘Ulamā of Al-Azhar” *ibid.*, p. 223-224.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE KŌANS IN THE MU MON KWAN

Introduction

This paper attempts something which at first might seem unusual, that is, to analyze a collection of Zen kōans. According to some scholars of Zen, the kōan “cannot be understood by logic; it cannot be transmitted in words; it cannot be explained in writing; it cannot be measured by reason”¹⁾. This seeming contradiction touches upon a basic problem encountered in trying to understand the religious conceptions of another culture. For a *religious understanding* of kōans (by Zennists) there is no need for explanation, indeed there is no way a kōan can be analyzed. The intention of the kōan is to bring about a state of enlightenment, devoid of conceptualization, beyond the realm of words and even thought. However, for an *academic understanding* of kōans we can, and should, analyze them in order for non = Zennists to comprehend their function and purpose in Zen. We shall return to this point a little later, but first let us explain what constitutes a kōan.

Kōan is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese characters *kūng án*, which mean “public record”. These characters were used by Buddhists to signify, “‘a public document setting up a standard of judgement’, whereby one’s Zen understanding is tested as to its correctness”²⁾. Theoretically kōans may take any form, but the most common consists of questions and answers (*mondō*; *wèn tāo*), stories or statements³⁾. One of the most famous kōans is in the form of a *mondō*, “The Master Jyōshū was once asked by a monk, ‘Has a dog also Buddha-nature or not? Jyōshū said, ‘Mu!’”⁴⁾ *Mu* (*wú*) was the character used by Zennists to translate the sanskrit word *śūnyatā*, meaning “emptiness” or “devoid of self-nature”. However, even with

1) Ruth F. Sasaki, “The History of the Koan in Renzai (Lin-Chi) Zen”. *The Zen Koan: Its History and Use in Rinzai Zen*. Isshū Miura and Ruth F. Sasaki, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1965 p. 5.

2) D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (Second Series), ed. C. Humphreys, New York: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1970, p. 93.

3) *Ibid.*, p. 108.

4) Mumon Ekai, “The Mu Mon Kwan”, trans. Sohaku Ogata, in *Zen for the West*. S. Ogata, New York: Dial Press, 1959, p. 91.

this explanation of *mu*, the kōan appears meaningless to non = Zennists, and many seem to think that the "key" to understanding Zen lies in uttering nonsense. Needless to say, this is not the case. For this analysis, we are going to consider kōans as means of communicating a particular understanding of reality, the Zen understanding. By means of kōans, Zen Masters are able to convey the most important ideas, attitudes and conceptions of Zen Buddhism. "The koans do not represent the private opinion of a single man, but rather the highest principle, received alike by us and by the hundreds and thousands of bodhisattvas of the three realms and the ten directions" 5).

If we accept the fact that kōans were intended to aid in the attainment of enlightenment (*satori*; *wù*), then we must view them as having a single goal and purpose. However, kōans appear radically different in form and content; therefore, the problem in analyzing kōans lies in discovering the various methods used to achieve the same end. This problem is very similar to the problem faced by students of myth. A group of myths from a given culture appear totally unrelated; however, they are all indicative of a common cultural outlook and it is our problem to understand where the similarities lie, or rather how cultural ideas are communicated through myths. In an attempt to solve this problem, Claude Lévi-Strauss pioneered what is known as the structural study of myth. In this type of analysis, myths are treated as a particular type of language which communicate cultural ideas. As a result of his studies, he has offered the following working hypothesis for analyzing myths:

- 1) If there is a meaning to be found in mythology, it cannot reside in the isolated elements which enter into the composition of a myth, but only in the way those elements are combined.
- 2) Although myth belongs to the same category as language, being, as a matter of fact, only part of it, language in myth exhibits specific properties.
- 3) Those properties are only to be found *above* the ordinary linguistic level, that is, they exhibit more complex features than those which are to be found in any other kind of linguistic expression 6).

We can immediately see the similarities in the problems encountered when analyzing myths and kōans. 1) The meaning in kōans does

5) Sasaki, p. 5.

6) Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth", *Structural Anthropology*, Garden City: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1967, p. 206.

not reside in the isolated elements, i.e., the questions and/or answers, but in the way these elements are combined. That means the simple questions and seemingly irrelevant answers are not as important as the *reason* for giving a seemingly irrelevant answer to a seemingly simple question. 2) While kōans are a form of language, they do exhibit specific properties which enable us to recognize them. 3) The importance of kōans is *not* to be found in the words or actions used, but *above* the ordinary linguistic level. By comparing an approach to kōans and myths, I do not mean to imply that they are the same thing; however, I do think that one might use a similar methodology to facilitate an understanding of both kōans and myths. Cultures use various means to communicate their understandings of reality, some use myths, some use laws and regulations. The Zen Buddhists used kōans as one means of transmitting their particular ideals, and as such, they are suitable subjects for our analysis.

Brief History of Kōans in Zen

Before presenting the analysis of the kōans in the *Mu Mon Kwan*, I would like to give a brief history of the kōan in order to place this aspect of Buddhism in perspective. Zen is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese character *ch'án* which is, in turn, a transliteration of the Sanskrit word *dhyāna* which means "meditation". This sect of Buddhism places greater emphasis on personal religious experience acquired through meditation than on scripture; however, this does not mean that they reject scripture. The goal of Zen is enlightenment or *satori*, which is the goal of all Buddhist sects. Since this enlightenment involves the ability to see things "as they really are" i.e., without conceptualizations, the Zennists believe that the dependence upon words and conceptions should be curtailed — thus their dependence upon meditation. The kōan system was developed among Zen Buddhists as a means of facilitating the attainment of satori through meditation. One should understand that the kōan is not an *object* on which the Zennist meditates in order to reach *satori*; rather, it is a device to "develop artificially or systematically in the consciousness of the Zen followers what the early masters produced in themselves spontaneously" 7). This consciousness is devoid of conceptualization

7) Suzuki, p. 90.

and dichotomization, and thus the kōan cannot be seen as an object of meditation. To meditate on the words of a kōan is an error; rather, one should meditate in order to prepare oneself for realization of that which the kōan exemplifies.

Prior to the development of the kōan system, this consciousness of ultimate reality (*satori*) was transmitted by means of questions and answers (*mondō*) between Masters and students. Students were expected to ask questions of the Masters in order to progress along their spiritual path. When the students had no questions, the Masters would try to raise them in their minds; in order to do this, there developed a group of stock questions. One of the most popular questions asked by pupils was, "Why did Bodhidharma come to China?" i.e., what is the teaching of Zen (Bodhidharma brought Zen teaching to China). The masters, in turn, most frequently asked the students how they came to the monastery. "'Whence comest thou?' was not a question prompted by mere curiosity; for if we really know the whence and the whither we are already masters of Zen"⁸⁾.

The most radical change in the use of the kōan system came when Masters stopped using kōans they themselves had created and began using those of past Masters. According to Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Nanyüan Hui-yung (Nan'in Egyō, d. 930) questioned one of his disciples about the formulas of Lin-chi (Rinzai Gigen, d. 866) and thus, "Koan Zen, or the use of the words of earlier masters in a fixed and systematized form to instruct or test a student, may be said to have truly begun"⁹⁾. Suzuki names four circumstances which led to the rise of the kōan system in Zen. The first was the aristocratic nature of Zen, which had to be curbed if it was to continue as a viable sect. "Aristocratic Zen was now turned into a democratic, systematized and, to a certain extent, mechanized Zen"¹⁰⁾. Second, several hundred years after the time of the sixth patriarch, Hui-nēng (Enō, 638-713), Zen lost some of its originality and had to be renewed in order to stimulate the development of Zen consciousness. The kōan, as a means of developing this consciousness, gave new life to the Zen movement. Third, after hundreds of years of development, various "scriptures" began to accumulate among Zennists. The sect which emphasized

8) *Ibid.*, p. 84.

9) Sasaki, p. 10.

10) Suzuki, p. 90.

meditation over scripture began to create its own scripture about meditation and thus invited a process of intellection. If the Zennists thought about past Masters and their doings rather than trying to find *satori* themselves, then the spirit of Zen would suffer. The kōan, as a means of breaking students away from the process of conceptualization, was a means of curbing this intellection process. Fourth, quietism, the opposite of intellection, also became more prevalent in Zen. Thinking that speech, as a process of conceptualization, was detrimental to the attainment of *satori*, many monks rejected all forms of communication and preferred to sit quietly, contemplating their existence. This type of Zennist forgot that words, even though they may be conceptualizations, were nevertheless necessary for a proper understanding of the purpose of Zen. Kōans, being words which lead one to the goal of *satori*, would serve to dispel this false notion of quietude¹¹⁾. The rise of the kōan system, thus can be seen as a logical outgrowth of the philosophy behind Zen. As such, kōans are a middle path between the two extremes of intellection and quietude.

Analysis of the Kōans in the Mu Mon Kwan

The *Mu Mon Kwan* or *Mumonkan* is a collection of forty-eight kōans compiled by the Master Wu-men Hui-k'ai (Mumon Ekai, 1183-1260). In the preface, the author states the time and purpose of the work.

In the summer of Jyōtei 1 (1228) I was head of the monks at Ryūshō monastery in eastern Ka. When they begged me for instruction, I took up the kōans of the ancients to make them serve as tiles for knocking at the gate. In guiding each student in accordance with his type, I have noted kōans at random which became, without plan, a good collection. There are forty-eight of them, but I have not arranged them in any order. I call the collection the *Mu Mon Kwan*¹²⁾.

This collection was brought to Japan in 1254 by Shinchi Kakushin, a pupil of Wu-men. For this analysis I have used the English translation by Sohaku Ogata¹³⁾.

The first problem in the analysis consisted of organizing the kōans. As stated above, Wu-men did not arrange them in any specific order.

11) *Ibid.*, pp. 90-111.

12) Mumon, p. 91.

13) *Ibid.*

At first I thought of organizing them according to the eighteen kinds of questions given by Shan-chao of Fēn-yang in Suzuki¹⁴⁾, but this did not prove fruitful because these questions were only those asked by pupils of Masters, while the *Mu Mon Kwan* contains questions asked by Masters of pupils and kōans which do not contain questions. Because of my limited knowledge of the traditional interpretations of the individual kōans, I could not classify them according to the five types given by Sasaki¹⁵⁾ or the eight types given by Ogata¹⁶⁾. Therefore, I devised my own system of classification, in order to single out common elements in the various kōans. After detecting the common elements, I can begin to examine them in order to try and understand the important conceptions represented by the various kōans.

The system has two main parts. The first deals with the form of the kōan and the second deals with the purpose or example stated in the kōan. The first part has three main divisions; I. Questions (which may or may not have answers), II. Statements Given by Masters (which may be either verbal or non = verbal) and III. Stories (more than one question or statement given in a narrative form). I have further divided the first part into three sections; A. Questions Asked by Pupils of Masters: this includes 1. Anonymous Pupils and Named Masters and 2. Named Pupils (possibly future Masters) and Named Masters. B. Questions Asked by Masters of Pupils. This can be of four types; 1. Pupil(s) Anonymous — Masters Named, 2. Pupil(s) Named (possibly future Masters) — Masters Named, 3. Named Masters who ask questions in order to find a successor or Master among pupils, and 4. Questions asked by a Master which are without answers. C. Questions asked by Masters of Masters. This classification, together with the numbers of the kōans which are included in each category is given in *Table I*.

The second part of the classification system deals with the purpose or example stated in the kōan, i.e., its relationship to enlightenment. A. A Question, Statement or Story Which Results in Enlightenment. B. A Question, etc., Which Exemplifies Enlightenment (both parties

14) Suzuki., pp. 87-89.

15) Sasaki., pp. 47-49.

16) Mumon., pp. 76-77.

TABLE 1

I. Questions

- A. Asked by Pupil of Master
 - 1. Pupil Anonymous—Master Named: 1, 7, 9, 18, 21, 24, 32, 33, 37, 48.
 - 2. Pupil Named—Master Named: 19, 23, 28.
- B. Asked by Master of Pupil(s)
 - 1. Pupil(s) Anonymous—Master Named: 2, 11, 14, 15, 35, 39.
 - 2. Pupil Named—Master Named: 2, 15, 41.
 - 3. Asked to Find New Master or Successor: 40.
 - 4. Questions Without Answers: 4, 5, 8, 16, 20, 36, 38, 39, 43, 45, 46, 47.
- C. Asked by Master of Master
 - 10, 11, 14, 22, 30, 42.

II. Statements by Master

- A. Verbal: 3, 6, 12, 17, 20, 25, 26, 28, 31, 34, 44, 46.
- B. Non-Verbal: 3, 6.

III. Stories

2, 3, 5, 6, 11, 13, 14, 23, 28, 31, 32, 39, 42, 46, 47, 48.

are recognized as enlightened). C. A Question, etc. Which Shows the Enlightenment of One Party. D. A Question, etc., Which Shows the Unenlightenment of One Party. This classification is given in *Table 2*.

TABLE 2

- A. Resulting in Enlightenment: 2, 3, 7, 15, 19, 28, 41.
- B. Exemplifying Enlightenment: 10, 11, 14, 40.
- C. Shows One Party's Enlightenment: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48.
- D. Shows One Party's Unenlightenment: 11, 14, 26.

From the repetition of numbers in both tables, we can see that many of the kōans, not just those designated as "stories", contain two or more parts. One kōan may ask several questions of different types, or of the same type, and questions may be mixed with statements. In *Table 1* we can see that, in general, the most common form of the kōan in the *Mu Mon Kwan* is the question, and that the most common forms of questions are either those asked by anonymous pupils or by Masters where the answer is not given. Statements given by Masters are next in occurrence with verbal statements being far more prevalent than

non-verbal statements. We can also see that kōans in the form of stories constitute one-third of those given. The numerical differences between the four most common types are so slight, and the differences between these four and the rest of the types are so great, that we can safely conclude that the most common, and therefore, most important types of kōans for our analysis are 1. Stories, 2. Verbal Statements, 3. Questions Asked by Anonymous Pupils and 4. Questions Without Answers. We can assume that the story kōans are merely literary devices and have no intrinsic value due to their form. Of more importance, are the questions and statements contained in the stories, so we will concentrate our attention on these.

In the first group, questions by anonymous pupils, we see that two types of questions are asked. The first type is rather simple, as would be asked by a novice monk. In kōan 7, a novice asks "Will you please instruct me, master?" In kōans 18, 21 and 33, the Master is asked "What is Buddha?" And in kōan 37 the question is, "What is the meaning of Bodhidharma's coming to the West?" The second type of question indicates a more advanced level of achievement in which the fine points of doctrine are puzzling students. These are such things as; "Has a dog Buddha Nature or not?" (1), "Since both speech and silence are concerned either with affirmation or negation, how can we avoid violating (the way in which Truth manifests as such)?" (24), or "Is there any teaching which you have not yet preached to others?" (27). The important thing to note here is that the answers given to both types of questions are basically the same. When asked "What is Buddha?" the Masters reply, "Three catties of hemp" (18), "A dirt-cleaner" (21) or "There is no mind, no Buddha" (33). When asked if there is any other teaching, Master Nansen replied, "Yes.... It is neither mind, nor Buddha, nor a thing" (27). When asked about the problems inherent in speech and silence, Master Fuketsu replied, "I always think of the view of the south river in March, when birds are singing and flowers are at their best" (24). From this we can conclude that these kōans tell the student that enlightenment does not depend on the type of question asked, nor one's proficiency with doctrines or sayings of the Masters; rather, enlightenment depends on one's ability to perceive that to which the Master's answer points. The monk in kōan 24 who asked the complex question about speech and silence was shown to be a fool by the

Master, while the novice in kōan 7 was immediately enlightened after his simple request for instruction. This teaches the students that they should not dwell on the words of the kōan in order to attain enlightenment, but on non-acceptance of conceptualization exhibited by the Master. One does not need to be a scholar in order to divest oneself of conceptualization and dependence on dichotomies. *Satori* is non-conceptual and non-dual, and cannot be attained until one releases oneself from these errors.

The same types of concepts are exemplified in the other two types of kōans, questions without answers and statements by Masters. In kōan 4, Master Wakuan asks, "Why has the barbarian (Bodhidharma) from the western heaven (India) no beard?" This question is not consistent with our conceptualizations because Bodhidharma was almost always shown, in works of art, with a beard. Kōan 46 tells us that the true man should not be content to climb to the top of a hundred-foot pole, but should climb a step above the top of the pole. In kōan 38, we are given an illustration, "A water buffalo is going out through a window. Her head, horns and hoofs are through but her tail cannot pass. Why is this?" And the Buddha, in kōan 6, tells us after holding up a flower, that, "I have in my hand the doctrine of the right Dharma which is birthless and deathless, the true form of no-form and a great mystery. It is the message of non-dependence upon (words) and letters and is transmitted outside the scriptures". These koans give the student the same message, that *satori* is not to be found in conceptualizations, and that one must break away from dependence upon conceptions in order to see things "as they really are".

Let us now turn to the classification of *Table 2*, in order to see the relationship of the kōans to enlightenment (*satori*). We can see that the most common type is C., which shows the enlightened nature of one party in the kōan. It is interesting to note that the kōan which ends by saying "so and so was then enlightened" is *not* the most common. Likewise, kōans which show the verbal banter of two enlightened persons, and the kōans which show unenlightened persons are not the dominant form. From this information, we can conclude that emphasis is not placed on immediate enlightenment after a meeting with a Master, the verbal interplay of those who are enlightened or the condemnation of those who are not enlightened. Rather, the student

is told, through the kōan, that there are persons who are enlightened and they wish to help those who are not. In this way, immediate enlightenment after a short period of training (which would certainly be rare) was played down, as well as the seemingly boastful interplay of enlightened beings and the rebuking of those who are not yet enlightened. The student was given a goal, which could be attained (the enlightenment of the Masters shows this) but cautioned that this attainment might take a long time. Furthermore, once a person was enlightened, he should not waste time showing off this enlightenment; rather, one should use the insights gained by enlightenment in order to help others gain *satori*.

Before concluding, I should like to deal with one of the problems mentioned at the first of the paper, i.e., the difficulty or even inappropriateness of trying to analyze kōans. I said that, according to Buddhists, a kōan "cannot be understood by logic... it cannot be measured by reason" ¹⁷⁾. If, as we have seen, kōans reject conceptualization and seem to defy logic and reason; how can we hope to analyze them? The problem here is a methodological one, involving the dispute between the adherent to a particular religious tradition and an outside interpreter. As a religious device, the kōan cannot be interpreted, this would lead to the error of intellection ¹⁸⁾, of trying to find the truth in the words and concepts of the kōan rather than viewing the kōan as a "tile with which to knock at the gate (of reality)" ¹⁹⁾. This attitude towards kōans is suitable for Zennists; however, for non = Zennists trying to understand the purpose and function of kōans, this attitude is not suitable. The historian of religions should not be interested in gaining *satori* through the academic study of kōans; if this were the case, then, as we have seen, they would fall into the error of intellection. The purpose of the historian of religions should be to achieve an understanding of the various components of a religious system in order to appreciate that system as a whole, and then (possibly) compare it with other systems. The analysis presented here attempts to fulfill that purpose. Not to understand these kōans for the sake of personal enlightenment; rather, to gain an understanding of how Zen Buddhists utilized the kōan system in order to enlighten

17) See p. 66, above.

18) See Suzuki., pp. 91-93.

19) See Mumon., p. 91.

themselves. In other words, to find the function of the kōan system as a means to achieve a religious goal — enlightenment. Thus, one can justify such an analysis for an historian of religions while one cannot justify it for a Zennist. With this in mind, let us look at what conclusions can be drawn from our analysis.

Conclusion

From the information gained by the classification shown in *Table 1*, we have seen that, although the form and content of the various kōans in the *Mu Mon Kwan* differs greatly, the kōans all seem to carry the same message to the Zennist. That is, that the way to *satori* is not through *dependence* upon words, even if they be words of the Buddha or past Masters; however, one should not reject words, for, imperfect as they are, they are the only means we have of attaining enlightenment. They should use the words and ideas contained in the kōans to reach *satori*, but they should never confuse the two. Conceptualizations, words, logic and reason are *means* whereby one attains enlightenment, but they must not be *equated with* enlightenment. “The koan is useful as long as the mental doors are closed, but when they are opened it may be forgotten”²⁰). We have seen from the structure of the kōans that a question, no matter how skillfully asked, will be met with a seeming absurdity or contradiction as long as the student still holds on to conceptualizations. This idea is communicated to the student by means of the attitude exemplified in the kōans. If this were bluntly stated, the student would merely accept it as a fact, an entity to be memorized and handed down. By means of the kōan, Zen Masters are able to transmit this message to their pupils in such a way that they might realize the truth for themselves rather than relying on someone else’s realization. The religious attitude of Zen is thus transmitted by means of the kōans, while at the same time teaching the student not to dwell on the words or actions used. The message of the Buddha is very subtle, and requires a very subtle means of communication.

We have also seen that, according to the information gathered by the second classification system, *Table 2*, the end product of enlightenment is the transmission of enlightenment to others. The enlightenment

²⁰) Suzuki, p. 98.

of one being is useless without the enlightenment of all beings. The vast majority of kōans in the *Mu Mon Kwan* show that *satori* can be achieved, and that it should be exhibited, not in the condemnation of those who are not yet enlightened, but in the actions and attitudes of the Masters who have reached *satori*. The kōans also show that quick enlightenment is not the usual case, rather, one must work hard to break the bonds of conceptualization in order to see the “right Dharma which is birthless and deathless, the true form of no-form and a great mystery”²¹).

The kōans we have examined thus serve the function of correcting the two errors of intellection and quietude. They use words and actions to show that words and actions are conceptualizations which should be understood as such in order for one to attain enlightenment.

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21) Mumon, p. 98.

KILLING IN SACRIFICE: A REPLY

In a polemical article said to go “beyond . . . an ordinary book review” (p. 136), Bruno Dombrowski¹ makes it quite clear that he utterly dislikes the thesis of *Homo Necans*, a book which he finds both too long (p. 143) and not detailed enough (*ibid.*); his quotations concentrate on pp. 1-32 and completely ignore pp. 98-325. The author does not even attempt to indicate what the book contains, and actually distorts its thesis by the title he chose for his article. A passage which explicitly describes ancient Greek sacrifice (HN 9), with the ritual cry marking the climax (HN 12), is not only torn from its context and given a seemingly absolute status, but “most powerful” (*am mächtigsten*) is replaced by “most profound”, and, even worse, “the god” (*der Gott*) is rendered by “God”, thereby bringing in irrelevant and misleading associations with a term stemming from the Jewish and Christian traditions. From such a beginning, Dombrowski sets out to teach “the proper method of historical interpretation” (p. 144). He dwells on the interdependence of the general and the interpretative part of the book (p. 141f.), as if he had never heard of a “hermeneutical circle” before and he dismisses the biological approach with a formulation which merely exhibits his lack of comprehension, for a behavioral pattern is certainly not an “attitude of animals” (p. 144). His more detailed criticism concentrates on exactly 31 lines of the book. As it happens, these lines, occurring at the beginning and the end of the introductory chapter, contain marginal remarks referring to Hebrew and Islamic religion and were by no means meant as ‘interpretations’ carrying the weight of an argument. Dombrowski may well be a specialist in this field, and it may be left to the specialists to disentangle the historical Isaiah (p. 138) and his exact dogmatic position. The parallels I drew to Zarathustra and Pythagoras (HN 14f.) have been noticed before by other writers and were therefore anything but original. But the book, as its title indicates, is on Greek religion and its antecedents. Even if my asides as well as every statement on Judaism

¹ “Killing in Sacrifice: The Most Profound Experience of God?”, *Numen* 23 (1976), pp. 136-144, against Walter Burkert, *Homo Necans. Interpretationen alt-griechischer Opferriten und Mythen*, Berlin 1972 (henceforth quoted as HN).

and Islam in the book were wrong, this would not in the least detract from the main thesis of *Homo Necans*, but merely show once more that Judaism and Islam are farther removed from the older strata of religion as a result of historical developments with which everybody is familiar. But in fact Dombrowski is largely fighting windmills of his own making.

Thus HN 9 quotes Lev. 6:9 for the central importance of animal sacrifice in ancient Judaism “down to the destruction of the temple”. Dombrowski says this applies to “pre-exilic Israel” only and triumphantly asserts that the passage is post-exilic (p. 138f.). There were, of course, two destructions of the temple; but the mention of Antiochos Epiphanes in the following sentence (HN 9) leaves no doubt that the passage means “down to 70 A.D.”.

HN 15 states that “Diaspora Jewry . . . became, in practice, a religion without animal sacrifice” (*daß das Diaspora-Judentum . . . praktisch zu einer Religion ohne Tieropfer wurde*). Dombrowski finds that “this implies that Burkert sees fundamental differences between two types of Hellenistic Jewry” (p. 139), and goes to some length to refute the alleged implication. But the statement in HN 15 is much more simple and obvious: Jews did not practice sacrifice outside Jerusalem, and thus were set apart from the ‘pagans’ and their sacrificial feasts; lip service to sacrifice is quite another thing than life experience of bloodshed and slaughter.

HN 19 mentions the ritual slaughter on the last day of the *Hadjdj*. Dombrowski claims that the author is giving this practice “much greater significance for Muslimic life than it has in reality” (p. 137)—as if the problem were the amount of significance. HN 19 correctly, as even Dombrowski seems to acknowledge, states that the ‘center’ of the *Hadjdj* is prayer. But neither prayer nor the possibility to “fast instead” (*ibid.*) is the crucial point, but the fact that “mass slaughter”—Dombrowski’s words—has occurred, and does occur to the present day, in the context of the most sacred experience. Not even Dombrowski succeeds in explaining this fact with the help of the thrice invoked (pp. 137; 140f.; 144) *communis opinio*, or by the “*do-ut-des* formula” (p. 141) or by the “intention to create communion” (p. 137). To stress that “the ritual is rather indistinctly prescribed and followed” (p. 137) is merely to close one’s eyes to the real problem.

It is the very paradox of the sacralization of killing which *Homo*

necans tries to explain—not “all kinds of sacrifice” (p. 138). The solution proposed is that instead of asking how killing ever got into the sphere of the Sacred, we ought to understand how the institution of the Sacred developed from the situation of man killing for food i.e., of hunting. The thesis entails: 1) the continuity of ritual from palaeolithic hunting to animal sacrifice, as found in early civilizations, 2) the functional role, both social and psychological, of aggression and killing with regard to anxiety, and 3) the basic antinomy of death and life in the experience of sacrifice. Hence a sequential structure is derived, which proves successful as a hermeneutical means to understand attested myths and rituals in their structure and meaning. Methodologically, the book works with a concept of ‘ritual’ analogous to that current in modern biology and strictly avoids reconstructing ‘ideas’ or ‘beliefs’ as prior to ritual.² All this obviously requires critical re-examination and further discussion,³ but this is precisely what Dombrowski fails to provide. Hence also this reply has been necessary.

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Editors' Note: As B. Dombrowski's article in *NUMEN* XXIII (1976) was not a review commissioned by *NUMEN* but the author's spontaneous and critical response to W. Burkert's *Homo Necans*, the Editors felt that Prof. Burkert was entitled to exercise the right of reply. The discussion is herewith closed.

² Dombrowski, expressing his belief that, in ritual, “more often than not celebrants are quite conscious of the real and original meaning and significance of the motif of what they are doing” (p. 144) seems to be unaware of scholarly *communis opinio* as regards Greek and Roman rituals since more than 80 years. There are, however, several levels of consciousness in religious practice, even beyond the verbal, let alone the theological. The interpretations offered in HN suggest that there was more understanding in ancient myth and ritual than admitted e.g., by the old *mana*-theory once prominent in handbooks.

³ I take the opportunity to refer to some works—unknown to me in 1971—which approach the same problem from quite different points of view: Dieter Wyss, *Strukturen der Moral*, Göttingen 1968, p. 136ff. on “Die Verschränkung von Inzestverbot und Opfermythologem”; René Girard, *La violence et le sacré*, Paris 1972; R. Ardrey, *The Hunting Hypothesis*, 1976.

A HISTORY OF MESOPOTAMIAN RELIGION

Jacobsen's *The Treasures of Darkness** is a truly remarkable achievement, comparable in many ways only to W. Otto's studies on Greek Religion. His masterly recreation of the spiritual life of Ancient Mesopotamian man is well known from his previous works, especially from his contribution to *Before Philosophy*—a work which has done more than almost any other to transform the study of the ancient Near East from an esoteric occupation of a few specialists, to an organic and legitimate branch of the Western Humanities. His combination of philological preeminence, uncanny empathy into the intellectual and religious life of the Sumerians, and rare felicity of expression—qualities which distinguish all his previous writings—manifest themselves in this great work in all their full power.

Those of a more positivistic bent may claim that he makes the ancient texts too resonant poetically and a bit too profound intellectually. However, in a field where the qualities of aesthetic appreciation and philosophic sensitivity have been too infrequently represented, it seems wiser to err in the direction of seeming over-explication. Whether one differs with Jacobsen in specific details or even in general orientation, one must admit that we have before us a model of scholarly and humanistic interpretation—one which treats the ancient texts with the seriousness and penetration they deserve.

Nor is the book to be taken simply as the ingathering of his previous studies in the field; this has been attempted elsewhere (*Towards the Image of Tammuz and Other Essays on Mesopotamian History and Culture*: Cambridge, 1970). Nor does its uniqueness lie in the richness of new material and wide-ranging documentation it presents or in the fact that we now have in written form most of his great lectures: on the "Personal Gods", on Enuma Elish, Gilgamesh, and others. To my mind, the greatness of the book lies in the creative integration of the wide range of methodological approaches which Jacobsen has used over the years into a new organic whole, one which transcends any of the methodological structures or grids used before.

* JACOBSEN, Thorkild, *The Treasures of Darkness, A History of Mesopotamian Religion*—New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1976, 273 p. \$ 15.

Each of his previous studies has been distinguished not merely by a richness of factual information, but also, and especially, by the creative use of some new methodological focus. Rarely does one find such a careful attempt at doing justice to such a wide range of approaches—from the almost materialistic (the gods Lahmu and Lahamu are but personifications of the geological process of silting and being silted) to the almost mystical (the use of the “numinous” in his more recent publications); from the ecological (while all of Tammuz figures somehow represent the principle of fertility, their specific representations differ from area to area according to the central economic concern of each area: hunting, cattle breeding, date cultivation, etc.) to the psychological or even the psychoanalytical (his brilliant treatment of the female psychology of Inanna, or the theme of parricide in the Enuma Elish, of maturity in the Gilgamesh Epic); from the use of the mytho-poetical in *Before Philosophy* to the literary-aesthetic interpretations of the Akkadian epics. And above all, a constant preoccupation with the process of humanization (or humanification) by which originally “intransitive” nature gods become more and more “transitive”—human, humane, and articulated personalities distinguished by an outgoing will and purpose.

What is truly exciting about this book is the subtle manner with which these various methodological foci interpenetrate and complement each other, thus creating a multileveled texture of rare beauty and sophistication. In Enuma Elish, for example, Tiamat is not merely the personification of the salt waters of the Persian Gulf mating with the sweet waters of the rivers, but is also a representation of the passivity of the older generation of gods who resent the creative restlessness of youth. However, the story also has a clear psychological aspect: Marduk is involved in an act of parricide—he kills his parents. Not quite warns Jacobsen; note that Marduk does not kill his immediate parents; note also the sympathy with which Tiamat is depicted: as a woman with real motherly feelings. Now just at the moment when through the skill of Jacobsen we are totally involved in the literary and psychological aspects of this piece of world literature—and under the spell of his “New Criticism” have forgotten that this work of art is not merely an expression of eternal and transcultural human values—we are suddenly confronted by another level of interpretation where the psychological ambivalence of the poet towards the act of parricide is given a profound and unexpected political interpretation. To our great joy, however, the

political interpretation instead of cancelling the psychological-literary approach, enhances and complements it. The whole book abounds in such surprises.

Without a doubt, one of Jacobsen's major contributions in this book is his discussion of the "personal god", a religious phenomenon which seems to have originated in Mesopotamia and which spread from there not only to Egypt, but to Israel as well. At this juncture, it may be useful to raise a few questions concerning the implications of the term "personal". A personal god is either (a) a god who is concerned with my person; or (b) a god with a clearly articulated person(ality). Jacobsen clearly opts for the first meaning. Furthermore, he clearly points out that the Mesopotamian personal god, as a personification of Lady Luck, had little or no personality of its own.

One is therefore tempted to ask what relationship, if any, exists between this personality-less "personal" god and the process of "humanification" by which intransitive nature gods emerged into anthropomorphic transitive ones with clearly articulated wills and personalities? At first glance, the term "personal" in the concept personal god would seem to link this new phenomenon to the humanification process, a thesis central to all of Jacobsen's studies. However, further reflection would seem to cast doubt on this association.

Furthermore, the relationship between the Mesopotamian personal god and the personal god of Israel is also somewhat problematic. Yahweh is not a personal god simply because he is concerned with the person of Israel. He is a personal god because he is a most highly articulated personality—in fact, probably the most articulated personality of all Near Eastern deities. Indeed, if one is looking for connections between Israelite personal religion and the Near East, one could postulate a linear development, not from the Mesopotamian personal god, but rather from Jacobsen's "transitive" high-gods, to Israel's super-transitive deity. Whatever the case may be, the problem deserves some clarification.

A few observations concerning the human reaction to the personal gods may now be in order. If Jacobsen finds the idea of the personal god to be a positive religious contribution, he is clearly disturbed by the human reaction to this type of god, a reaction which found its literary expression in the personal penitential prayers. He is perplexed by a seemingly improper human intimacy with the divine and by a rather

ostentatious display of pseudo-humility, which he takes to be an unconscious expression of an over-blown sense of self-importance. What has happened to the traditional (and theologically "proper") sense of awe before the divine and the transcendent? At least in the Old Testament, says the author, this audacious parading of pseudo-humility is more often than not, balanced off by more sincere expressions of human sinfulness and real lack of self-worth.

Professor Jacobsen's negative reaction to the seeming lack of awe in these personal confessions may be a reflection of a modern or Western sensibility in which such a familiarity with the divine can hardly "co-exist" with a proper sense of awe. The fact is that the ancients may have reacted differently. The arguments that Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Jeremiah and Job have with God may seem strange and more than a bit improper to the modern Western sensibility, but they are certainly typical of biblical religiosity. The rabbis of the Talmud, who certainly experienced divine awe, speak to and about God with an audacious familiarity which Moslems and Christians may find positively irreligious. Kierkegaard in his *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 369n, had a similar problem in dealing with the too-human intimacy with the divine reflected in some Islamic legends. Jacobsen's evaluation of the human reactions in the Mesopotamian compositions may indeed be correct. My remarks, therefore, are only intended to offer an alternate subjective vantage point rooted, shall we say, in a more "oriental" tradition.

After the sublime chapters on the Gilgamesh Epic and Enuma Elish, the last chapter on the spiritual life of the first millennium is somewhat disappointing. Jacobsen sees very little in the religious literature of this period that is of positive religious significance and very much that he actually dislikes: the growing brutalization of the divine image, a possible reflex of human despotism; the growth of astral religion; the obsession with death and the underworld and many other "unpleasing" phenomena. Even the interesting later tendency to view the various gods and their functions as aspects of one deity is not treated with any real enthusiasm. (Contrast the importance of such developments for the historian of biblical monotheism.) Furthermore, it seems a bit strange that after having rejected the humility of the second millennium penitential prayers as a pseudo-humility, Jacobsen seems to reject the seemingly real humility of first millennium kings as "passivity" and

"quietism". On the contrary, one could make a good case here that a new type of piety is emerging which has real affinities with similar phenomena in the Old Testament (as Jacobsen himself points out).

Jacobsen ends his study on a more "positive" note quoting, without comment, Nebuchadrezer's prayer to Marduk. The idea, that without the deity's help man cannot serve him properly, expressed in the concluding lines: "Cause me to love Thy exalted rule/Let the fear of Thy godhead be in my heart", seems to be a new and positive breakthrough in the religious thought of the Near East, one which deserves a broad comparative treatment. It is an idea which appears at about the same time in Israel and becomes a dominant (although not sufficiently investigated) theme in later Jewish liturgy and Christian theology. This idea is a fine example of the type of personal religion that began to emerge in this seemingly barren period. The phenomenon of Nabonidus and the deeply personal prayers of his mother (cf. *The Ancient Near East: Supplementary Texts and Pictures Relating to the Old Testament*, ed. James B. Pritchard, pp. 124-6) also merit discussion in this context. It seems that something fine and new was beginning to break through the archaic stereotypes of the older Mesopotamian traditions. Are these positive innovations, as well as the many barbarizations that Jacobsen has pointed out, somehow to be connected with the growing "Aramaization" of Mesopotamian culture? Could it be that the relatively greater evocativeness of some of this later material for the biblicalist and the student of West Semitic culture and religion has to do with the non-Mesopotamian quality of some of this material? Whatever the case may be, this later period and its religious traditions were not all "bad", and even if they were, deserve a broader treatment.

My few questions and qualifications in no way detract from the greatness of this book. It is a masterwork of one of the great humanists and scholars of our age. Its publication is a source of great joy both to the scholarly world and general public.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Tworuschka, Udo, und Dietrich Zilleßen (Hrsg.), *Thema Weltreligionen. Ein Diskussions- und Arbeitsbuch für Religionspädagogen und Religionswissenschaftler* — Frankfurt a.M., Moritz Diesterweg; München, Kösel, 1977, 224 S., DM 26,80

Wer Religionspädagogik studiert, wird eines Tages an einer deutschen Schule Religionsunterricht geben, evangelischen oder katholischen. Folglich bilden evangelische oder katholische Theologen diese Studenten aus. Weil kirchliche Obere sich einen Stoß gaben, dürfen mancherorts zukünftige evangelische und katholische Religionslehrer gemeinsam studieren. Für die Religionspädagogik ist dies ein Fortschritt.

Es gibt viele Schulen in Deutschland und viele Schüler, folglich gibt es auch viele Studenten, die Religionslehrer werden wollen, und für die vielen Studenten gibt es Professoren. Die Professoren lehren Theologie an evangelischen oder an katholischen Fachbereichen. Lehren sie an einem gemeinsamen Fachbereich, dann hören sie offenbar auf, evangelische oder katholische Theologen zu sein, dann haben sie sich nämlich husch husch in Religionswissenschaftler verwandelt. Für die traditionelle Religionswissenschaft, die sich mit dem Studium allein des Christentums nicht zufrieden gibt, ist dies ein Rückschritt.

Aus dem Religionsunterricht hatten sich jahrelang mehr und mehr Schüler abgemeldet; ihnen sagte die christliche Unterweisung alten Stils nicht länger zu. Wollten ihre Lehrer eines Tages nicht in leeren Klassenzimmern unterrichten, dann mußten sie sich geschwind etwas Neues einfallen lassen, etwas Anziehendes und Fesselndes: Sie artikulierten also neue Themen und reflektierten sie nach der gesellschaftlichen Relevanz und curricular: die Bürgerrechtsbewegung, die Mitbestimmung, die "Pille" und so fort. Wenn diese Modernisierung ihren Zweck erfüllt, dann hilft sie dem Fach Religionspädagogik weiter.

Doch auch solche Themen lassen Schüler sich nicht bis zum Überdruß vorsetzen. Lieber suchen sie sich selber andere, und bei ihrer Suche stoßen sie immer häufiger auf nicht-christliche Religionen. Lehrpläne fordern schon seit Jahrzehnten, daß auch nicht-christliche Religionen im Religionsunterricht besprochen werden sollen. Doch kennen die allermeisten Religionspädagogen als gute Theologen höchstens ein paar Gemeinplätze über andere Religionen. Deshalb waren sie diesem Thema stets in großem Bogen ausgewichen, und jetzt sollen sie mit einemmal ihren Schülern fremde Religionen erklären. Das kann kein gutes Ende nehmen!

Alarmiert sind auch die Herausgeber des vorliegenden Bandes. Damit möglichst viele Religionspädagogen einigermaßen über die Unterrichtsstunden mit den fremden Religionen kommen, haben sie rasch ein Floß zurechtgezimmert. Dafür nahmen sie, was sie eben kriegen konnten, lange, kurze, dicke und dünne Bretter. Einundzwanzig Autoren trugen bei. Religionspädagogen sind unter ihnen, evangelische und katholische Theologen. Andere Autoren sind Religionswissenschaftler, zum Glück gelernte Religionswissenschaftler, nicht über Nacht umgewandelte. Sie kennen auch anderes als nur die religiöse Tradition des Abendlandes. Wenn dieses Floß schwimmt, dann halten es die Beiträge eben dieser gelernten Religionswissenschaftler über Wasser.

Da gibt es einen Artikel "Was ist Religionswissenschaft?" Er ist kompetent geschrieben, er schreitet das Feld ab und ist nur wenige Seiten lang. Wenn ich könnte, würde ich ihn jedem ungelernten Religionswissenschaftler als Pflichtlektüre verordnen. Da gibt es einen anderen Artikel über "Religionenunterricht als neues Schulfach". Sein Autor spricht mir aus der Seele. Aber weil Religionslehrer nun mal theologisch und nicht auch religionsgeschichtlich ausgebildet wurden und werden, predigt er stocktauben Ohren, leider.

Gelernte Religionswissenschaftler bieten in diesem Buch dem Religionslehrer, der fremden Religionen nicht länger ausweichen kann, einige kommentierte Texte und einige Kurztypologien zu Fragen nach der Sexualität, nach der politischen Verantwortung und so fort. Als Religionsgeschichtler bestaune ich stets aufs neue den Elan mancher Systematischer Religionswissenschaftler, wenn sie kreuz und quer durch Religionen und Kulturen aller Zeiten und Kontinente ihre Vergleiche ziehen. Doch wie dem auch sei: was haben die gelernten Religionswissenschaftler den ungelernten mit diesen Texten und typologischen Vergleichen nun wirklich in die Hand gegeben? Eine gutgemeinte Rettungsleine. Mit dem bißchen Material ist jedoch nur ein Stück Bindfaden daraus geworden. Was, wenn der kurze Faden zuende ist? Dann hat der Pädagoge nichts mehr, an dem er sich weiterziehen könnte, dann paddelt er wiederum im warmen Bad seiner alten Vorurteile und der seiner Schüler wohlig im Kreise, dann wird auch in Zukunft alles bleiben, wie es immer schon war.

355 Marburg-Lahn, DBR,
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HANS-JÜRGEN GRESCHAT

SMITH, Bardwell L. (Ed.), Hinduism, New Essays in the History of Religions, Studies in the History of Religions (Supplements to *Numen*) XXXIII—Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1976, viii + 231 p. D. fl. 48.

Outside the classroom, the critical edition or the philological discourse, it does not much matter whether we write Kṛṣṇa (or indeed Kṛṣṇa) or Krishna; what matters is less the possession of a typewriter capable of rendering diacritical points than the understanding of the material, material in an alien tongue and from an alien culture. I have no quibble with the prefatory statement on the “Transcription of Indian words”—any reasonably consistent system will suit, although a system which can produce such oddities as “Swami Vivekānanda” (*recte* Swami Vivekananda or Svāmī Vivekānanda) is perhaps open to improvement. What is rather more worrying is to encounter scholarly work, whether based on texts or on oral information gained in the field, where it is evident that the writer does not actually know the language in question. Walter G. Neevel, Jr. (pp. 53–97) makes no secret of his “lack of a command of the Bengali originals of the major sources” (p. 57), which is at least forthright; and when he adds, “the tentative nature of my conclusions should be clear to all”, he does the critic’s job for him. Eleanor Zelliot (pp. 143–168) confines herself in a subtitle to “the Literature [on *bhakti*] in English”, and on p. 148 further confines herself to “sources in English available in the United States”; why does she exclude the multitude of material which, as she notes, “is also available in French and German”? Why does she exclude the greater multitude of material available in Indian languages? Her bibliography will doubtless be useful, but its self-confessed limitations make it less useful than it might have been. (Specific omissions are also noticeable, for instance F. R. Allchin’s important article in JRAS 1966.)

Mira Reym Binford’s article (pp. 120–142) requires particular attention, for, as the Editor notes (p. 2), it differs importantly from the others, primarily in dealing with a Little Tradition deity “generally unknown to Western scholars”. Much of the article is valuable, although I think that too much is made of the “Muslim connexion”. But, though she does not herself say as much, a perusal of notes 1 and 2 suggests that, despite having “lived in India for six years” (p. 226), the author does not speak Hindi or Rājasthāni: her material has been translated into English for her. This does not deter her from etymological speculations (p. 127 and n. 22) on the word *parco*, which (in this context) means “miracle performed by Rāmdev” or “narrative song telling of miracle performed by Rāmdev”; the argument-from-etymology is based chiefly on two dictionaries, both of whose titles are misspelt, the second so severely that I feel it only fair to the lexicographer in question to publish a correction: for “Sitaram Lal, *Rajasthani Sabad Kos*,

Caupasdin Shiksha Samiti, Jodhpur, V.S. 2026" read "Sītārām Lālas (ed.), *Rājasthāni Sabad Kos* Vol. III Part i, Caupāsnī Śikṣā Samiti, Jodhpur, V.S. 2026 (A.D. 1969)". The very title of the article is open to query. It is taken from a *bhajan* quoted on p. 131; n. 1 informs us that "Ethnomusicologist Komal Kothari, Rupaiyan Institute of Folklore [recte Rupayan Sansthan, the Rajasthan Institute of Folklore] shared with us his perceptive observations as well as sensitive translations of *bhajans*." I think it possible that Mr. Kothari may have made a slip here (assuming that the original word was *raṅg*), and that "Meeting in the assembly-hall of Rām of Rānūjā" is what is in question, not "Mixing in the Color of Rām of Rānūjā"—whatever that may mean. The subtitle too is not above reproach, for Rāmdev is not a "Rājpūt Hero-Saint" but a god, albeit not a god yet much favoured by the higher-caste orthodoxy. To n. 19 it should be added that some informants do claim that Rāmdev is an incarnation of Viṣṇu, whilst others say that he is an incarnation of Rāma. Ms. Binford is at her best when simply describing what she saw at Rāmdevrā, and, despite my complaints, her article makes a useful addition to her fine film on the same theme.

Of the remaining articles in Part One of this book, Norvin J. Hein's (pp. 15-32) is an interesting if unpretentious account of the practices and beliefs of Caitanya and his followers; Joseph T. O'Connell (pp. 33-52) gives a valuable discussion of the attitudes towards the *Bhagavadgītā* found in two texts of the Caitanya school, but seems to go off at rather a tangent by devoting the last six pages of his article to "Gaurīya Vaiṣṇava Participation in the Secular Affairs of Muslim-dominated Bengal"; and Cyrus R. Pangborn (pp. 98-119) describes the history of the Ramakrishna movement, stressing the "apostolic" rôle played by Vivekananda.

Part Two of the book consists of two articles on epic mythology. In the first, J. Bruce Long (pp. 171-207) analyses the story of the Churning of the Ocean and discovers that "the 'Indian Mind' ... operates on the basis of a set of intellectual principles which differ fundamentally from those of the 'Savage Mind'" of Lévi-Strauss. Convincing Lévi-Straussians will no doubt ignore or, at best, seek to falsify Long's findings, which will be a pity: studies of myth, as of most other things, do not benefit from the rigorous toeing of party lines. The second article in Part Two is by Alf Hiltebeitel (pp. 208-224): it represents a major contribution to the (continuing!) controversy over the Poona Critical Edition of the *Mahābhārata*. It is a great gift to be able to see sense in an often apparently motiveless story, especially when, as here, later tradition provides its own, different, interpretation. Hiltebeitel's reasoning is clear and convincing.

Despite the opening sentence of this review, once it has been decided to employ diacritical points, the producers of a book are responsible

to see that they are employed correctly. The number of lapses in the book under discussion is very large. None of the errors I have noticed (typically *m* for *ṁ*, *i* for *ī*, *ā* for *ā* etc.) will cause confusion, but all will annoy. Two other small grumbles: why does Hein quote a Hindī *dohā* (p. 27, n. 16) with all but one of the final *a*-vowels removed, thus ruining the metre? And why does Hiltebeitel indulge in the pointless practice of running Sanskrit words together in Roman transcription when it happens to be the case that they would be run together in Nāgarī (e.g. last line of p. 212)? As it is only since the introduction of printing that it has become customary to leave any spaces at all in Nāgarī Sanskrit, there seems very little justification for printing *rūpamatyugram* when one can just as easily, and much more clearly, print *rūpam atyugram*.

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JOHN D. SMITH

CHRONICLE

Many conferences of the greatest interest to students of religion very often do not even have the word "religion" in their official title. These may be conferences of anthropologists, egyptologists, sinologists etc., but their sections on religion often make important contributions to the history of religions. Thus the European Association for Japanese Studies held its first International Conference during 20-21 September, 1976, in Zurich (Switzerland). A report of the proceedings of the section on "religion" will be given in a future issue of *NUMEN*.

From 17-22 April, 1977, an international conference—perhaps the first of its kind—on "Islam in [South, Southeast, and East] Asia" took place at the Truman Research Institute of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. About 40 scholars from America, Europe, Asia and Australia participated, discussing processes of "islamisation" in Asia west of Iran, the relations between Islam and local Asian cultures, and the "centre" and "periphery" of Asian Islam. The closing session was a symposium on the comparative status of Islam in various Asian cultures.

The 12th Conference on Medieval Studies took place, concurrently with the meetings of other learned societies concerned with the middle ages, at the Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Mich. (U.S.A.) from 5-8 May, 1977.

The centenary of the birth of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy was marked at the University of Lancaster (England) by a colloquium, organised by the Dept. of Religion under the title "Image and Iconography East and West" (July 8-11, 1977). In the nature of things the main emphasis was on eastern rather than western iconography. A special treat was the performance-cum-lecture of Mrs. Anne-Marie Gaston, a fully "ordained" dancer from the schools of the great Indian masters, who showed how the living traditions of Indian dancing may throw light on poses found in sculpture and iconography. A special session, for the benefit of those who have to teach religions to undergraduates, was devoted to the use of iconographic material in teaching.

The 7th World Congress of Jewish Studies took place 7-14 August 1977 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem with several hundred scholars from all over the world participating. Many of the sub-sections

into which the five main sections were divided, dealt directly with History of Religion (biblical, rabbinic, gnostic, kabbalistic) subjects.

The International Organisation for the Study of the Old Testament (IOSOT)—an affiliate of the IAHR—held its 9th Congress at Göttingen (Germany) from 21–26 August, 1977. Almost 400 scholars participated. For one day the IOSOT moved its deliberations to Wolfenbüttel, the seat of the celebrated Herzog August Bibliothek, and it was also there that—fittingly enough—Prof. Smend presented his paper on “Lessing und die Bibelwissenschaft”, by common consent one of the highlights of the conference.

The 2nd National Conference of the comparatively young Australian Association for the Study of Religion was held at Brisbane, 25–28 August, 1977. Participants came not only from Australia but also from New Zealand and Papua/New Guinea. Papers were read on a variety of subjects and the inception of two new journals was announced: *The Journal of Studies in Mysticism*, and *Religious Traditions*.

During 28 August–1 September, 1977, the 14th CISR (International Conference on the Sociology of Religion) met in Strasbourg (France), with over 300 participants attending. The conference theme was “Symbolism” with sections on religious symbolism, secular symbolism and “symbolism and social classes”. One of the most striking papers was that presented by Bernice Martin (University of London) on “Symbolism and the Sacred in Contemporary Rock Music”, in which the author shed real illumination on her subject by making felicitous use of the categories of “liminality in the ritual process” (V. Turner) and of group/grid and ritual/zero structure (Mary Douglas). Two very interesting papers dealt with conversions to, and defections from, Rev. Moon’s Unification Church. Special sessions were devoted to the state of the sociology of religion in Japan, Quebec, and Poland (the latter with comparative reference to other socialist countries), but at times it was not clear whether the papers dealt with the Sociology of Religion in the respective countries or with the sociology of their respective religions.

The British Association for the History of Religions held its annual meeting 19–21 September, 1977, in London. A happy innovation at that meeting, and one worthy of imitation, was the presentation, in addition to the usual type of papers, of short reports by members on current research work in progress.

The American Academy of Religion, in conjunction with the American Schools of Oriental Research and the Society of Biblical Literature, held its annual meeting in San Francisco, 28-31 December 1977. A report of the proceedings of this conference will be given in a future issue of *NUMEN*.

Members of the IAHR will be interested to learn of the appearance of no. 1 of *Studi Storico-Religiosi* (published by the Scuola di Studi storico-religiosi dell' Università di Roma; two issues per year). Although seemingly a new journal, the publication is, in fact, successor and heir to the distinguished and prestigious earlier Italian series *Studi i Materiali di Storia delle Religioni*.

Another new journal, of interest to students of Meso- and South American Indian religions, *Latin American Indian Literatures* has recently been launched by the Dept. of Hispanic Languages and Literatures of the University of Pittsburgh, (Pittsburgh, Pa. 15260).

Z.W.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The following conferences and colloquia of special interest to students of religion are planned for the year 1978.

28-31 March, 1978

A seminar on Mithraism "Religio-Historical Qualifications of Mithraism, with particular reference to Roman and Ostian documentary sources". The seminar is organised by the Istituto di Scienze Storiche at the University of Rome, in co-operation with the Society for Mithraic Studies.

The Society for Mithraic Studies plans to hold further field-seminars *in situ* during the third week of September 1979 in Mainz (contact address: Dr. H. Humbach, Seminar für vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft, Universität Mainz, West Germany) and during the third week of September 1980 in Hungary (contact: Prof. A. Mócsy, Budapest).

28-31 March, 1978

An International Conference on Gnosticism will be held at Yale University (New Haven, Conn., U.S.A.). This event promises to become a worthy sequel to the Messina Colloquium of 1966.

4-7 May, 1978

The 13th Conference on Medieval Studies, sponsored by the Medieval Institute of Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008, U.S.A.). The programme contains many sections of immediate interest to students of religion, especially as the conference is held in collaboration, and will be meeting concurrently, with the American Society for Reformation Research, The North American Patristics Society, the 8th Conference on Cistercian Studies, the Society of Byzantinists and others.

15-18 May, 1978

The Deutsche Vereinigung für Religionswissenschaft (DVRG—the German branch of the IAHR) is holding its 14th Tagung für Religionsgeschichte at the University of Bonn. The overall theme of the conference is "Leben und Tod im Lichte religiöser Symbolik" and includes a wide range of papers on religious symbolism in ancient and living religions as well as a visit to the 'Ostasiatisches Museum' in Cologne.

The last conference of the DVRG was held in 1975. The papers have since been published under the title *Der Religionswandel unserer*

Zeit im Spiegel der Religionswissenschaft (Wissenschaftl. Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1976)

17-20 August, 1978

The Australian Association for the Study of Religions will hold its next meeting at LaTrobe University. Information from the Dept. of Philosophy, LaTrobe University, Bundoora, Victoria 3083, Australia.

The French member group (Société Ernest-Renan) holds its regular meetings—at which usually two papers are read—once every month. During the current academic year meetings have been held on 24 November and 15 December 1977; and on 26 January 1978. On Saturday 18 February, 1978 the 3rd Colloquium took place on the theme “L’attitude des religions à l’égard des métiers manuels”. The further meetings for the current year are scheduled for 16 March, 27 April, 25 May and 15 June. The meetings of the Société Ernest-Renan take place at the Collège de France.

15-17 September, 1978

First Conference of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, to be held at Columbia University, New York.

10-21 December, 1978

The 10th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences will be held in India. The section on Social Anthropology will devote part of its programme to the “Ethnography of Invocations and Incantations: Verbal Symbolism and Ritual Structure” and to “Scriptural Literature in Cultural Context”.

The main part of the Congress will take place in New Delhi (10-16 December). Among the “post-plenary sessions (symposia)” these on *Religious and Social Change* and on *The Primitive World and its Transformations: Life Styles, World Views and Values*, to be held in Madras and Ranchi respectively, should be of special interest to students of religion. Details and information can be obtained from Prof. L. P. Vidyarthi, Dept. of Anthropology, Ranchi University, Ranchi (Bihar), India.

Z.W.

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MAN AND BEAST

*The Hybrid in Early Chinese Art and Literature*¹

Our knowledge of Chinese religion and mythology rests on the evidence of art, archaeology and literature, which may be considered very generally in two types. There is the evidence of a natural, romantic and free tradition, sometimes associated with the south, and that of a formal, classical and inhibited tradition, sometimes associated with the north. Of these two major traditions, that of the north came in time to predominate over that of the south. For it was in the north that China's political and dynastic authorities emerged, and from thence that they extended their sphere of influence to the east, and then to the centre and the south. While this extension may be seen most clearly in political terms, it also affected cultural developments. The regimes of the north required intellectual conformity and support; there set in a tendency whereby the temporal masters and officials of the north were wont to mould and exploit the independent arts and mythology of the south so as to satisfy their own immediate political needs; and in the course of such treatment some elements of the southern tradition became subject to scorn and even suppression.

For students of Chinese mythology, this tendency has had the unfortunate result of overlaying some of the evidence of the natural urges of man with the purposeful creations of his intellect. From about the beginning of the Christian era, standardisation was affecting Chinese literature, both in the choice of the material that was sponsored for preservation and in the interpretations that were put on early writings in order to propagate orthodox beliefs. In studying early mythology, then, we must fasten on such evidence as preceded the move towards uniformity, and on that which survives from the live cultures of the

¹ Of the many scholars who have written on this subject and associated topics, I am glad to single out three to whose writings I owe a special debt: Noel Barnard, of the Australian National University, Canberra; Chang Kwang-chih, of Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Hayashi Minao, of the *Jimbun kagaku kenkyūjo*, Kyoto. The account of hybrid forms which is presented here is intended as a summary only, from which all but the most important references have been excluded. References to Chinese texts are to the *Ssu-pu pei-yao* edition, unless stated otherwise. Chinese characters for select names and terms are given on p. 117.

south. We may consider the paintings made on neolithic potteries of perhaps the fourth millenium BC, and the far more elaborate patterns that adorn the bronzes of c. 1500 BC and later. The inscriptions made on bones and shells tell us something of the aspirations of early Chinese monarchs of the Shang-Yin period (traditionally 1766-1122 BC), and of the processes for consulting divine powers; but they carry little information that bears on the specific nature of those beliefs. Although some of China's literature may date back to c. 1000 BC, the versions which we possess to-day must be carefully examined; for we must sift the grain from the chaff, rejecting the results of the subsequent editing that suited the needs of the imperial dynasties founded from 221 BC onwards.

Luckily, evidence of a less orthodox frame of mind survives elsewhere, despite the efforts of the officials of the north to deprecate its importance. It derives from the once thriving cultures of the south, and is seen in the art motifs and literature that emanated from the valley of the Yangtse River and beyond. These areas encompassed a terrain that was very different from that of the north, giving rise to the characteristic rice cultivation, and including large regions of swamp, forest and mountain. Such lairs lay beyond the reach of the Chinese official, who tended to regard them as the home of the untutored barbarian. It is from the artistic creations of such peoples, who were free of the northern mandarins' discipline, that we may learn something of China's early mythologies.

The Chinese believed in the existence and powers of a number of deities. *Ti*, or *Shang Ti*, or God on high, was venerated by the kings and possibly the peoples of Shang; he was conceived as a unity, probably in anthropomorphic terms; and he was thought to possess supreme powers over man and nature. The kings of Chou, who supplanted those of Shang from perhaps 1122 BC, believed in a different supreme deity, known as *T'ien*, or Heaven. *T'ien* may also have been conceived in human terms; and along with the institutions and moral examples ascribed to the kings of Chou, *T'ien* was adopted as an object of veneration by the imperial dynasties, who worshipped him right up to 1910. Both *Ti* and *T'ien*, it seems, existed on a higher plane than the *Shen*, or Holy Spirits. These were conceived in multiplicity, often being attached to specific sites on earth. The holy spirits would respond to prayer, invocation or, if the occasion de-

manded, to exorcism. For they were capable of actions which could help or harm man; and they were conceived in animal, hybrid, semi-animal or semi-human form. Finally, account must be taken of the *Kuei*, the demons who originated as manifestations of deceased human beings. They too were capable of benefitting or injuring man; they responded to prophylactic observances by man, and their presence could be invoked by specialist intermediaries. That the holy spirits and demons existed on an inferior plane to that of *Ti* or *T'ien* is shown by references in literature in which they follow *Ti* in order of precedence or carry out behests at his command.²

A number of changes may be discerned in the concepts of these deities. In the earlier stages, of the Shang-yin period (*c.* 1766-1122 BC), it was thought that the souls of the deceased ancestors of the kings shared the abode of *Ti*, and that they acted as intermediaries between *Ti* and the world of mankind. This office was also partly filled by mythological animals who served to link the two worlds. In later stages, i.e. during the early centuries of the first millennium BC, the importance of *Ti* had declined; his replacement by *T'ien* bore a number of social implications; and the veneration for the holy spirits may have been growing stronger. In addition, whereas hitherto it had been the souls of the deceased ancestors who had acted as intermediaries, from now on contact with sacred powers was effected by specialists drawn from the human, living world, who may variously be described as priests or shamans.

This development was accompanied by a change of treatment in Chinese art, as may be seen principally in the decoration of bronze vessels. In the initial stages, from perhaps 1600 to 950, animals are shown in full vigour, whom man treats with affection, reverence or awe. They are creatures whose powers are all too manifest, and there is little room for human beings beside them save in a minor, subordinate capacity. However, in the bronzes which may be dated from *c.* 900 BC, man is shown wielding strong powers with which he is capable of challenging, fighting and even conquering the animal world; for by now the animals are monsters which can harm man.³

² See *Lü shih ch'un-chiu* 9.3b, and *Huai-nan-tzu* (edition *Huai-nan hung-lieh chi-chieh*, Commercial Press, 1926; reprinted Taipei, 1969) 4.4a and 4.12b.

³ For the different stages in the treatment of animals, see Chang Kwang-chih, *Early Chinese Civilization: Anthropological Perspectives*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1976, chapters 8 and 9.

Similarly, in Chinese mythology, the all-powerful animals of the early stages yield place to the human hero, who is depicted possessing strength, courage and nobility with which to defeat the monsters who withstand him.

Evidence for hybrid forms in Chinese art and mythology appears in objects and literature that date from the fifth or fourth centuries BC and later. Such evidence must be considered in full recognition that it had been preceded by earlier, formative stages of cultural growth, and that those stages had lasted for a millennium and longer. Two contradictory principles may possibly be discerned. The first was that of identification of man with the animal world. Tribal ancestries were traced to an animal; divination was conducted through the medium of animal bones and shells; and attempts were made to make a contact with the animal spirits of another world by means of physical assimilation (e.g., the consumption of an animal's flesh, or wearing part of an animal's fur or skin). The second principle which may be seen operating in the Chinese treatment of the animal world is that of euhemerisation, whereby the myths and gods of an earlier origin were transformed into beings of authentic history, and animal figures were portrayed in anthropomorphic terms.⁴

The *Shan-hai ching*, or *Classic of the Mountains and the Lakes*, is a text which reflects the southern tradition. In those parts of the book that date from c. 400 BC, we find a didactic, descriptive guide to the holy places and sacred mountains of China. As would-be pilgrims or travellers we may learn here of the location of those sites and of the rivers which lead us thither; of the abundance of flora and the mineral wealth to be found there; and of the animals known to populate such places, be they normal, freak or hybrid. Probably the text had been written in the first instance to explain the features of a very ancient set of paintings or drawings; and from this explanation we may learn not only of the bodily characteristics of these animals but also of their cries, squeals or roars, and the consequences of consuming part of the animal's flesh or donning part of its skin or fur. Thus:

⁴ I use the term *euhemerisation* in this sense, in common with writers on Chinese mythology; see Derk Bodde 'Myths of Ancient China' (reprinted in Chun-shu Chang, *The making of China: main themes in premodern Chinese History*, Prentice-Hall Inc., New Jersey, 1975, p. 18).

370 leagues further east lie the mountains of Hsi-yang, with considerable supplies of copper on the south and silver on the north side. There is an animal there whose body is like that of a horse, with a white head, stripes like those of a tiger, a red tail and a cry like that of a human singer. The beast is named the Lu-shu; and wearing a piece of its skin will result in the birth of children and grandchildren (see *Shan-hai ching* 1.2a)

Various results follow the consumption of flesh or wearing the fur of these and other animals who are to be encountered in the holy places. Fortunate consequences included a cure from disease, relief from fear or bewilderment; and in addition to personal blessings of the type just cited, the result could be no less than a general blessing of peace and stability. However, the results could sometimes be disastrous, such as the onset of floods or drought, mighty enough to strike down a whole province. Or else, incidents of state could ensue, such as would require a general call for military service, to the hardship of the population. On a few occasions such calamities could follow after no more than the sight of one of these strange creatures.

These then are the beasts who may be encountered in the flesh on the holy mountains, and such are the results of assimilating to their persons. But our text also describes the *shen*, or holy spirits, known to reside in these sacred hills, and informs us how they may best be served and worshipped. Altogether there are some 400 spirits who are named and identified with particular sites, and all but some 80 are described in detail. In all cases they are hybrid in form, combining for example the features of bird and dragon, or horse and dragon, or swine and snake. In a very large number of cases the holy spirits are endowed with a human face, surmounting an animal's body, be it dragon, horse or ox, sheep, snake, bird or pig. We may read in our guide book:

In the third stage, south, there is a total of 14 Mountains, stretching for 6530 leagues, from Mount T'ien-yü to Mount Nan-yü. The spirits of those hills all have dragon's bodies with human faces; they may be worshipped with the sacrifice of a white dog and with prayer, and with rice used for the offering in grain (see *Shan-hai ching* 1.11a)

or else:

In the third stage, east, there is a total of 9 mountains, stretching for 6900 leagues, from Mount Shih-hu to Mount Wu-kao. The holy spirits of those hills all have human bodies with ram's horns; they may be worshipped with the sacrifice of a ram and with millet. Disaster brought about by

wind, rain or flood follows the sight of this holy spirit (see *Shan-hai ching* 4.7b)

In evidence of this type it would seem that the Chinese were clothing in human garb those gods whom they first conceived in animal form. This process is paralleled by the euhemerisation of Chinese myth, and may perhaps be seen in the next subject to be considered.

In 1934 grave-robbers who were active near Ch'ang-sha, south of the Yangtse River, lighted on the earliest piece of consecutive writing known in China other than inscriptions made on oracular bones, sacred bronze vessels or a few stone stele. The find was that of the famous silk manuscript of Ch'u, which has suffered a somewhat chequered history since its discovery (see figure A). As a result it is only in the last decade or so that the results of professional examination have become available.⁵

The silk manuscript, which may be dated at c. 400 BC, is written and illustrated in polychrome, with two major blocks of writing that run in opposite directions. The text is partly defective; it is subject to grave difficulties of palaeography and interpretation, and hardly any sentence may be read in entirety. However, thanks to the efforts of a number of scholars, it may be concluded that the manuscript gives an account of the creation of the orders of heaven and earth and of the emergence of natural processes such as the sequence of the seasons. It mentions the participation of the holy spirits and other deities in these processes; at one point it reflects the influence of the theory of the Five Phases that governed the cycle of creation, decay and rebirth.⁶

The manuscript text is surrounded by twelve peripheral figures, for whose reconstruction we are largely indebted to Professor Barnard

⁵ The manuscript is at present in the custody of the Metropolitan Museum, New York; the most detailed study published to date is that of Noel Barnard, (1) *Scientific Examination of an Ancient Chinese Document as a Prelude to Decipherment, Translation, and Historical Assessment — The Ch'u Silk Manuscript*, and (2) *The Ch'u Silk Manuscript — Translation and Commentary* (Monographs on Far Eastern History nos. 4 and 5, 1972 and 1973; Australian National University Canberra). The term 'Ch'u' is the name of a state which controlled parts of the Yangtse River valley in the centuries before 221 BC.

⁶ I.e., the theory of the *wu hsing*, sometimes rendered 'Five Elements' (see J. Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 2, pp. 232f., Cambridge University Press, 1969)



Fig. A. The silk manuscript from Ch'u; from Noel Barnard, *The Ch'u Silk Manuscript*, Canberra 1973 (folded sheet in rear cover pocket).

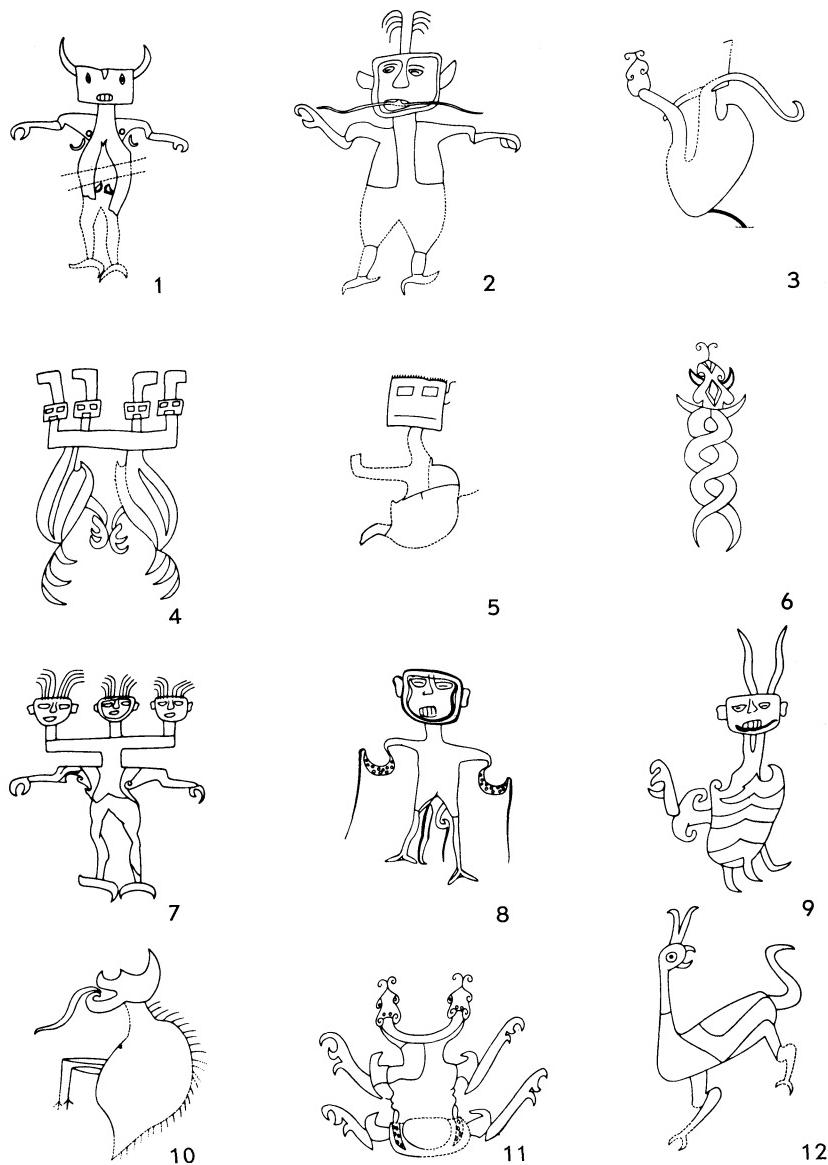


Fig. B. The twelve peripheral figures of the Ch'u Silk Manuscript; from Noel Barnard, 'Some Remarks Upon the Origin and the Nature of the Art of Ch'u' (included in *Proceedings of the first New Zealand International Conference on Chinese Studies*, Part III, edited by D. Bing; University of Waikato Hamilton, New Zealand, 1972, p. 2).

(see figure B). Each one of the twelve figures is accompanied by a short caption and a descriptive notice of its character, powers and activities. No certain interpretation of the figures can yet be given. But from the considerations which follow it seems likely that they may represent twelve guardian gods or holy spirits, severally invested with powers of action for each of the twelve months. Alternatively they may represent twelve shamans or intermediaries, wearing masks and capable of communicating with such deities. Whatever the correct interpretation may be, it seems likely that the twelve figures form important evidence in the history of worship and exorcism in China.

The descriptive notices of four of the figures (nos. 2, 5, 8 and 11) associate them specifically with the months or the seasons; and the forms of these strange creatures is such that they invite comparison with some of the hybrids who are mentioned in the *Classic of the Mountains and the Lakes*. Thus no. 7, with its human body and three heads, and no. 10, with its dragon head and bird's body, might easily fit the descriptions of spirits who are mentioned in that text. No. 5 with its square, human head surmounting a birdlike body, and no. 6, which is interpreted as a snake consisting of two entwined bodies and a single head, may be compared with the book's description of strange animals. In addition there are several possible, but not exact, comparisons which may be drawn between passages in the book and no. 9, with its bird's body, human face and antlers.⁷

Both from the text that is under consideration and the unique silk manuscript it is possible to trace features that are generally and almost universally associated with shamanistic practice; e.g., assimilation with an animal's garb or guise; utterances made in the tongues of animals or birds; and dependence on trees for ascent to or descent from another world. This last feature may be seen clearly, and somewhat regularly, at the corners of the silk manuscript. In other literary passages we learn of the prevalence of shamanistic practice in south and central China, both for the period that is in question and for several centuries later. Of a number of shamans who are named in the *Classic of the Mountains and the Lakes*, one, called 'Hsien', 'grasps a green snake in his right hand and a red snake in his left hand'. This is at the summit of Mount

⁷ For no. 5, see *Shan-hai ching* 5.26a; for no. 6, *ibid.*, 3.7a; for no. 7, *ibid.*, 5.23a; for no. 9, *ibid.*, 1.10b, 2.5a, 4.6a, 5.6a, and 5.27b; and for no. 10, *ibid.*, 1.4b and 5.44a.

Teng Pao, where the host of shamans go up and down (see *Shan-hai ching* 7.3a). In another text that derived from the south we have accounts of the shaman's work in restraining the souls of the deceased from leaving earth for ever, and in inducing them to return so as to enliven what is apparently a corpse;⁸ and elsewhere we may read of the shaman's use of grain and straw to effect a cure or to expel evil.⁹

The twelve figures of the silk manuscript, including some hybrids, may thus perhaps be taken to represent twelve spirits, or twelve shamans able to contact them and to drive away evil influences. The suggestion compels us to take a brief look at what may be said of the practice of exorcism in China. Probably the most clear evidence, albeit for some 500 years later than the time of the silk manuscript, is that of a description of a ceremony held at the imperial court; this was the Great Exorcism, practised for the emperors of the Eastern Han dynasty (AD 25-220), and probably stretching back to considerably earlier beginnings.¹⁰ At this ceremony the chief exorcist of state performed the main rites. He was clothed in a bearskin which was furnished with four eyes, presumably to ensure that it could command all-round vision. The object of the ceremony is defined as being the expulsion of pestilence and evil demons from home, court and palace; and the climax of the ceremony was reached in an invocation to twelve named spirits, who were summoned to devour the 'ten baleful influences'.

We therefore ask whether the twelve figures of the silk manuscript from Ch'u may be symbols of those twelve spirits who are defined by name for the ceremony of the Eastern Han court; or whether they may be the intermediaries sent to summon them. It may also be asked whether the twelve figures are prototypes of other series or creatures which appear at other stages of Chinese thought; e.g., the twelve divisions of the cosmos, the heavens or the day, who were later to be symbolised by twelve special animals;¹¹ or the twelve guardian

⁸ See the *Chao hun* and *Ta chao* poems in the *Ch'u tz'u* 9 and 10 (David Hawkes, *Ch'u Tz'u The Songs of the South*, Oxford, 1959, pp. 101f. and 109f.)

⁹ *Huai-nan-tzu* 16.19a.

¹⁰ For this ceremony, see Derk Bodde, *Festivals in Classical China*, Princeton and Hong Kong, 1975, pp. 75f.

¹¹ For the duodenary series, see Needham, *ibid.*, vol. 3 pp. 402f. The animals are used in their correct sequence to designate years as, e.g., "The year of the dragon".

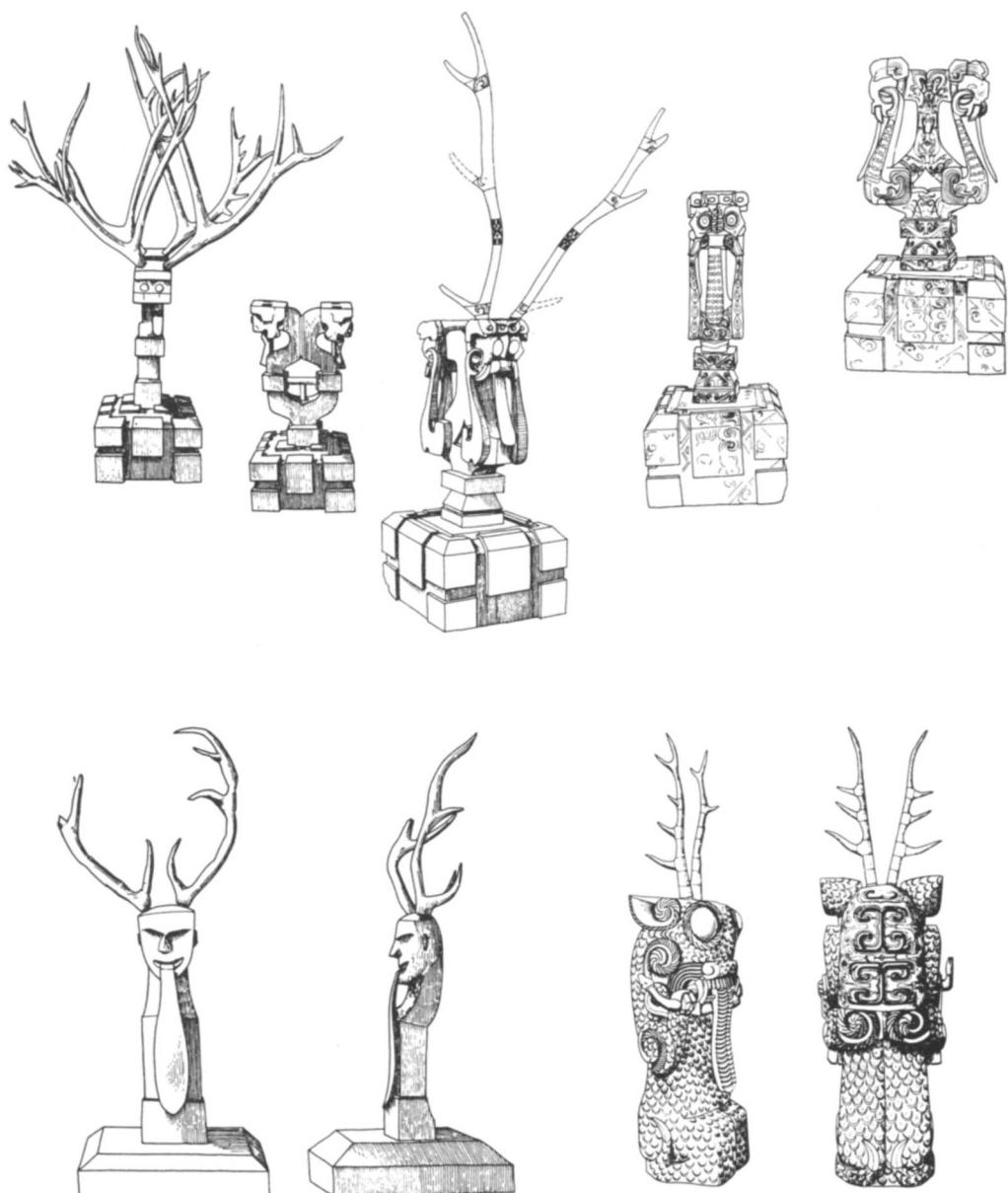


Fig. C. Examples of Tongue and Antler figures; from Noel Barnard, *ibid.*, p. 18.
The figure from Ch'ang-t'ai-kuan is on the right-hand side of the lower register.

spirits of heaven, who may possibly be seen on some early Chinese diviner's boards; or the twelve protective spirits of the household, invoked to procure domestic safety.¹²

These are open, but, we hope, not idle questions. The possibility that the twelve peripheral creatures of the silk manuscript of Ch'u, including some that are hybrid, represent twelve protector figures gains support from other considerations. In a number of graves that are situated in the same part of central China there have been found a whole series of single hybrid figures carved in wood, and characterised by the combination of prominent antlers and a long, protruding tongue (see figure C). In the great variety of figures of this type, the one discovered at Ch'ang-t'ai-kuan is perhaps the most dramatic, being finished in a variety of colours, goggle-eyed, and with hands grasping a snake that is in process of being devoured. Further examples of these features are seen in the figures painted on the coffin lids at the famous grave no. 1, of Ma-wang-tui.¹³ Among the multiplicity of elf-like creatures, animals, birds and hybrids there are a number of examples of antlered human heads and snake-devouring monsters (see figure D).

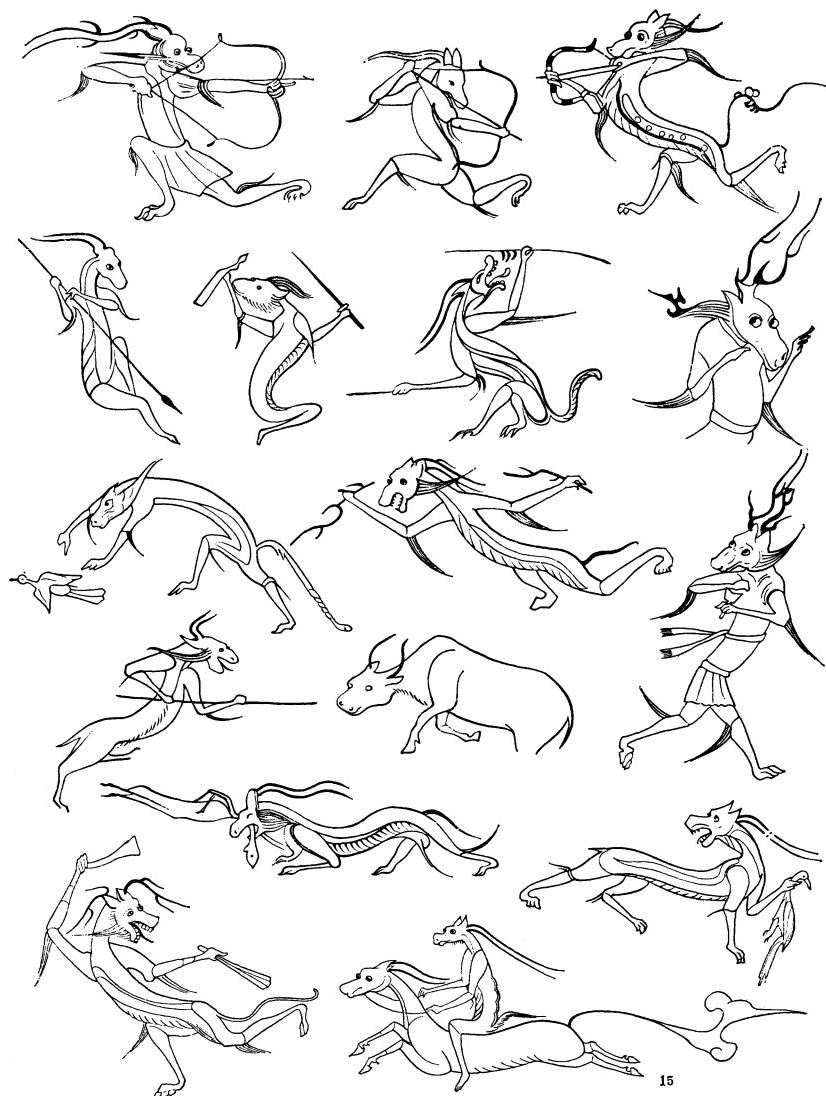
These are symbols which recur both within the Chinese cultural area and elsewhere. Thus in the cave of Trois Frères, the graves of Pazyryk and on the Gundestrup bowl we may see an antlered head combined with the features of animals other than deer, in portrayals of religious practice, shamanistic rite or funeral service. The protruding tongue is seen in Egypt, in figures of the god Bes, in Etruscan art and in India.¹⁴ Of these features, the antler has been interpreted as a symbol of superhuman authority, capable of warding off evil spirits and guaranteeing everlasting life; and the tongue, which appears sometimes with spots or drops upon it, is explained as being protruded as an expression of hope and prayer for rain.

The figure of the snake-devourer is seen at Ch'ang-t'ai-kuan and Ma-wang-tui, and it also appears in at least one literary context. This

¹² For these series, see Bodde, *ibid.*, pp. 90f.

¹³ This grave, which retained the incorrupt body of the countess of Tai, may be dated shortly after 168 BC.

¹⁴ For a study of these symbols, see A. Salmony, *Antler and Tongue An Essay On Ancient Chinese Symbolism* (Ascona, 1954).



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Fig. D. Decorative figures from the coffins of tomb no. 1, Ma-wang-tui; from *Kaoku* 1973, 4, p. 249, fig. 2)

is in the poem 'The summons of the Soul', which forms part of the collection of the Songs of the South, and dates from perhaps the third century BC. The poet describes T'u po, 'Lord of the Earth' as being 'Nine-coiled, with dreadful horns upon his forehead'. T'u po was known as the lord of the underworld, one of whose functions was to expel demons and to devour snakes, before they had a chance of consuming the body of a deceased person.¹⁵

The suggestion that a connection may be traced between the practice of exorcism, the symbols of antler and tongue and the figure of the snake-devourer must remain speculative; and it may be considered in the light of no. 2 of the peripheral figures of the silk manuscript from Ch'u. The reconstruction and interpretation of this figure is subject to doubt; but it appears to carry a double crest or a pair of antlers; and it is described by some scholars as having a mouth with a divided tongue, by some as having a mouth that is engaged in devouring a serpent.

Three other considerations or principles should be borne in mind in regard to the hybrid forms of early Chinese imagery: the belief in bodily transformation; the cults of immortality; and the composite figures of Chinese artists.

The belief that it is possible for one living creature to be transformed into the shape of another is seen both in a grand way and in rationalist terms. In mythology we hear that Kun, father of Yü the Great who saved mankind from flood, was transformed into a turtle; in a scientific context, Wang Ch'ung, who was writing during the first century AD, seriously cites examples of frogs being transformed into quails, or sparrows into clams.¹⁶ While there is no knowing how prevalent such a belief may have been, it is possible that the basic idea of transformation may have been present in the minds of some of the artists who fashioned hybrid creatures.

The Chinese have entertained a number of notions of paradise and immortality. Many believed in the existence of the world of the *hsien*, or immortal beings, who could fly and roam at will throughout the

¹⁵ See *Ch'u-ts'u* 9.5a (Hawkes, *ibid.*, p. 105).

¹⁶ See Wang Ch'ung, *Lun-heng* 2 (7), Huang Hui edition pp. 54f. (A. Forke, *Lun-heng Part 1*, pp. 325f.; original edition Shanghai, London and Leipzig 1907; reprinted New York, 1962).

universe, and it was thought desirable to provide deceased persons with the means of access to such a mode of existence. To undertake a journey through the empyrean and to achieve a life of eternity, a diet of jujubes or the juices distilled from jade was often prescribed; and talismans with particular features were usually buried with the dead. It is in such talismans that we may find a clue. Both the literary sources and the examples of early art give us examples of hybrids who are equipped to escort the dead on their journey. The Cherubim or Seraphim, or the Icarus, of the Chinese world are seen in two forms; either as combinations of a bird's body and a human face; or as a human figure at whose back wings have started to sprout.

The concept of transformation from one animal form to another and the desire to acquire immortality are possibly seen together in one particular type of hybrid whose appearance is quite rare. This is the figure of a human head and body, with a serpentine coil in place of legs.¹⁷ This appears at the apex of the famous painting from Ma-wang-tui, possibly representing the arrival of the soul at its final destination in paradise. The image is also seen in a stone relief of a

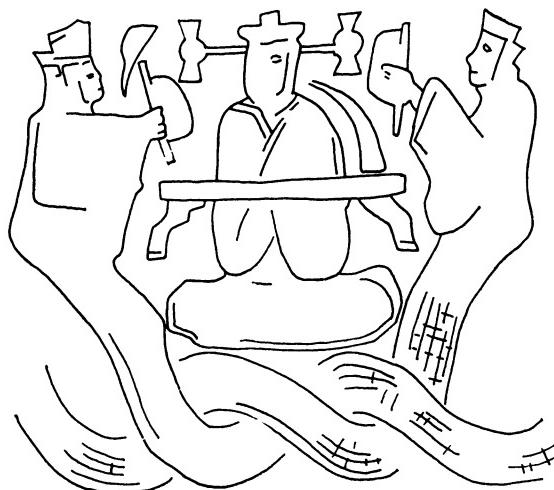


Fig. E. The Queen Mother of the West, with suppliants; from a stone relief in Shantung (reproduced from *Tōhō gakuhō* number 46, Kyoto, March 1974, p. 63, fig. 20)

¹⁷ This is to be distinguished from the pair of figures, each with a serpentine body surmounted by a human head, which represent Fu Hsi and Nü Kua.

later period; here there is a pair of suppliants who have apparently received their draft of the elixir from the Queen Mother of the West and are likewise being changed into immortal beings (see figure E). So far as is known, the image of transformation into serpentine forms as a means of achieving immortality does not appear in other cultures.

The third principle to be borne in mind is that of the composite figure. In the earliest stages of Chinese art that are exemplified in the bronzes of the Shang-Yin period (1766-1122 BC) there are a number of instances where two or more animals are shown in close association, in their entirety. In the art of south or central China of c. 500 BC there are a number of beautiful combinations of pairs of birds and animals, often snakes; these are sometimes fashioned so as to form a drum-stand (see figure F). But perhaps the most conspicuous example of all composites of this period is the lacquer screen from Wang-shan, of c. 400 BC; the 51 animals on the screen include three pairs of birds who are engaged in devouring snakes (see figure G, 1).

Composites of this type call to mind no. 3 of the peripheral figures of the silk manuscript from Ch'u. Difficult as this figure is to interpret for certain, it has been suggested that it is formed of a bird's body with a snake's head; and it may be asked whether a hybrid of this type may have developed from composite figures in which bird and snake are shown complete. It is also possible to look forward in time to the composite snake-cum-tortoise which makes its appearance in Chinese art from perhaps 50 BC or so. This image bears a cosmological significance, being one of the four animals that signify four of the five directions, or four of the five phases of creation. The snake-cum-tortoise symbolises the north, the extreme point of Yin, the climax of the wintry season.¹⁸

The heyday of the hybrid in Chinese art and literature may be placed in the fifth or fourth centuries BC; its home region seems to have

¹⁸ An important clue to the origin of this symbol which has yet to be explained may perhaps be found in a series of paintings of a recently excavated tomb near Lo-yang, which may be dated between 86 and 49 B.C. Three of the four animals appear in the forms which are well known in the following century and later, i.e., the dragon (for the east), the bird (for the south) and the tiger (for the west). The fourth figure, for the north, is a composite of a sheep's head,? tiger's tail and wings, and this is accompanied by a further hybrid of a ?cat's face and body, wings and a single horn. See *Wen wu* 1977, 6 pp. 10-11 and Plates 2 and 3.

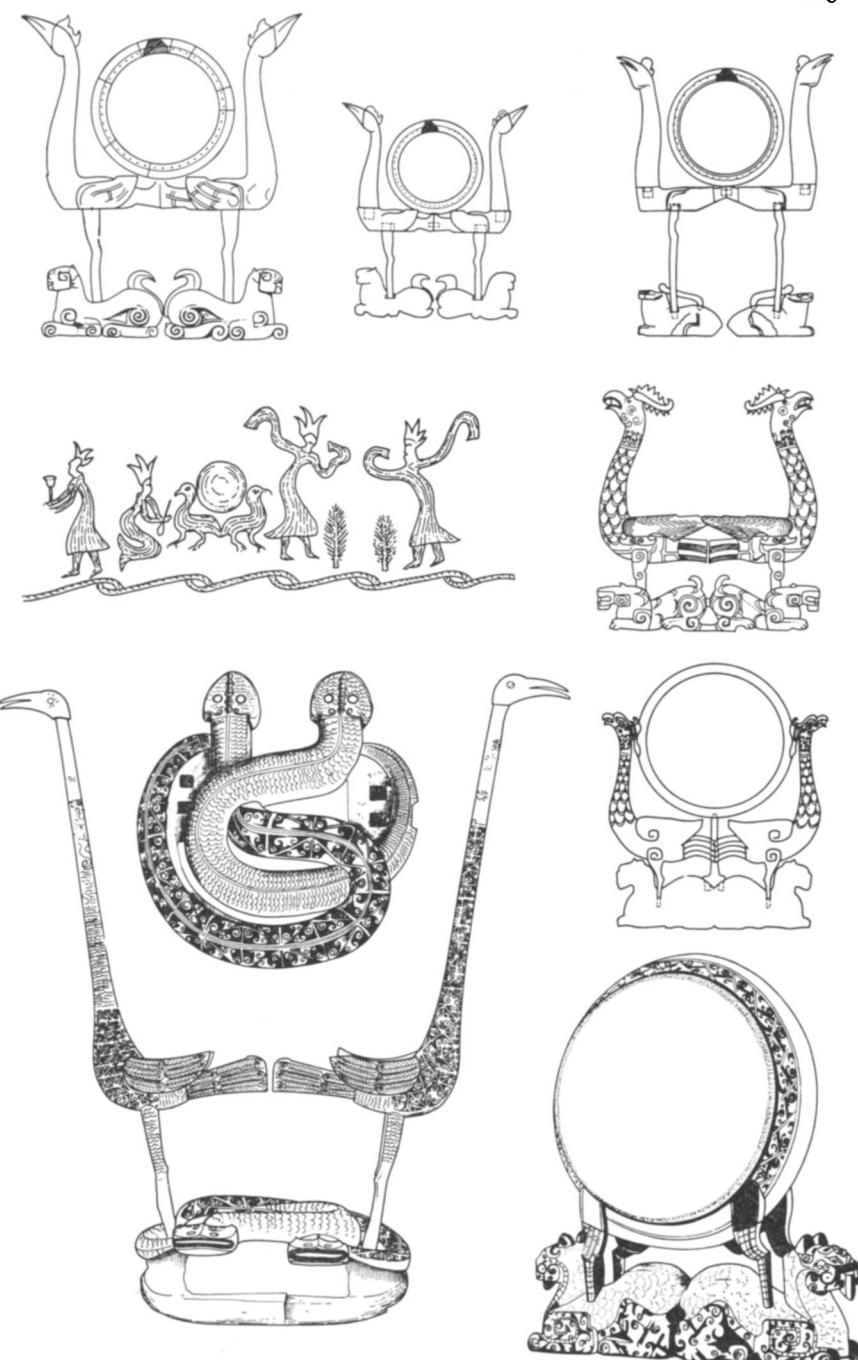
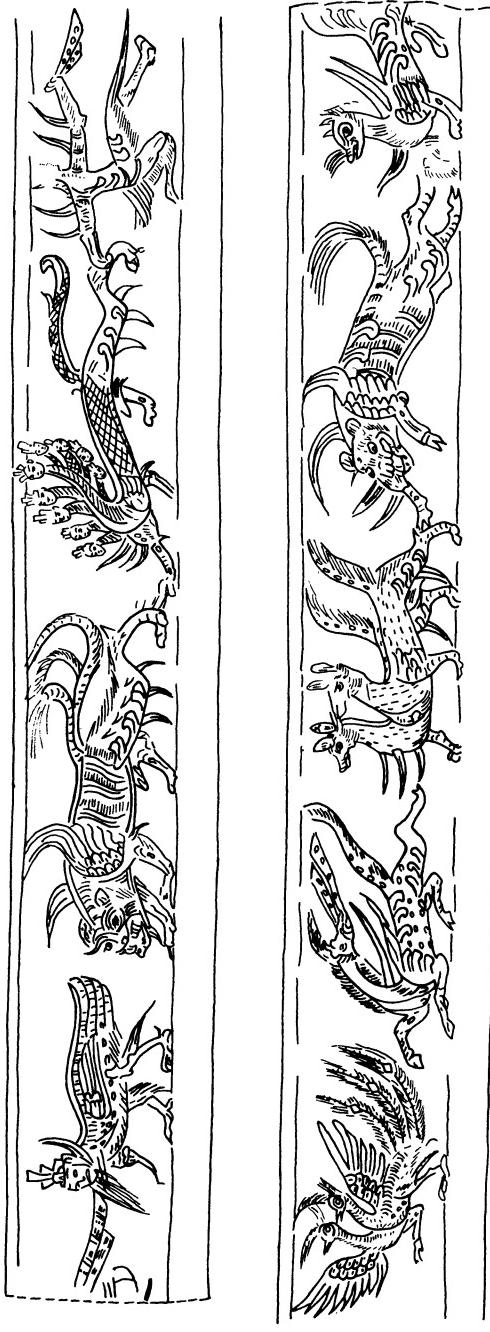


Fig. F. Pairs of birds and other animals in the art of Ch'u; from Barnard,
ibid., pp. 14-15.



(1)



(2)

Fig. G. (1) The lacquered screen from Wang-shan; from Barnard, *ibid.*, p. 17.
 (2) Reliefs from I-nan, Shantung; from Käte Finsterbusch, *Verzeichnis und Motiv-Index der Han-Darstellungen*, II, Wiesbaden, 1971, Table 95.

been centred on the great kingdom of Ch'u, that bestrode the valley of the Yangtse River. But before long China became unified under Ch'in, the first of the imperial dynasties, which was founded in 221 BC. Uniformity and standardisation were promoted in art, literature and mythology. If the lively, vivid styles and the strange tales of the south were not entirely suppressed, there was a sufficiently strong impetus from the north to propagate other art forms; with the propagation of the 'Confucian' cosmology, shortly after 100 BC, the attention of Chinese artists was directed to other symbols, as befitted the new and orthodox modes of thought. The snake-cum-tortoise, to which reference has been briefly made above, derived from just such developments.

The hybrid creature fell out of fashion. When we meet him again, he does not spring live from an artist's intuitive imagination; he is a creature of a secondary order. It has been observed above that the extant text of the *Classic of the Mountains and the Lakes* probably originated as explanations which were intended to accompany a series of ancient paintings. By the Eastern Han period (AD 25-220), those paintings had long since perished, although the explanatory text survived. We find that artists of the day were portraying creatures of fancy which may have been inspired by that text or which were intended to clarify it. Hybrids appeared once more, by now in stone reliefs, carved deliberately to illustrate concepts which were known second-hand, from literary sources; they perhaps lack the immediate appeal to the sub-conscious that is carried in some of the hybrids of an earlier age.

These secondary versions of hybrids are seen most conspicuously in the sculptures and reliefs of I-nan, which are dated variously in the third century and later (see figure G, 2). The ideas persist, in the human faced bird, who is seen in the company of two-headed birds or two-headed deer; or in the nine-headed monster K'ai-ming, who guarded the holy *axis mundi* of K'un-lun. These figures are not identified by explanatory labels which relate them specifically to the animals or animal-spirits of the *Classic of the Mountains and the Lakes*; but it is to such origins that they may be traced; and all credit is due to the contemporary Chinese artists who drew on such material at a time when official efforts were being made to counteract its spirit.

Some fifteen hundred years later, at a time of intensive literary and



Fig. H. Illustrations to the *Classic of the Mountains and the Lakes*; from an edition of 1893, which reproduces woodcuts of before 1667.

bibliographical activity, new editions were being prepared of that famous text. Artists provided a new set of illustrations; craftsmen cut the blocks, so that these could be printed for insertion with the text; and lest an ignorant reader should be perplexed, each one of the new illustrations bore its own descriptive caption, relating the illustration to the specific passage in the book. These were the vignettes of strange creatures and the groups of animals set within a landscape which were first cut in the seventeenth century and have been adopted by publishers ever since (see figure H). For the wheel has come full circle; the original depictions of the holy spirits believed to be attached to some of China's mountains had perforce been replaced by literary descriptions. With the passage of time, Chinese artists sought to recapture the concept of those gods. Separated as they were by centuries from the original beliefs, they had little first-hand devotional experience on which they could call. They have nonetheless succeeded in presenting posterity with woodcuts that are graceful, imaginative and vigorous.

Ch'ang-t'ai-kuan 長臺關	Shang ti 上帝
Hsi-yang 椒陽	Shen 神
Hsien (immortal) 仙	Shih-hu 尸胡
Hsien (shaman's name) 咸	Teng-pao 登葆
I-nan 沂南	T'ien 天
K'ai-ming 開明	T'ien-yü 天虞
Kuei 鬼	T'u po 土伯
Lu-shu 鹿蜀	Wang-shan 望山
Ma-wang-tui 馬王堆	Wu-kao 無皋
Nan-yü 南禹	

THE MEANING AND PURPOSE OF *OPENING THE MOUTH* IN MORTUARY CONTEXTS *

Sources referring to the Egyptian ritual of Opening the Mouth are relatively abundant. They can be classified into two groups; one consists of explicit representations, namely ritual texts and pictures of the scenes, the other consists of texts and pictures that make allusive references to the ritual.

The former group is limited; the ritual texts and the pictures of the scenes are found almost exclusively in the Theban tombs from the New Kingdom and later. The latter group is extensive; it comprises a heterogeneous material culled from the Pyramid texts, Coffin texts and the Book of the Dead, of temple inscriptions from the Old Kingdom down to Ptolemaic times, of inscriptions on stelae from different periods, and of statements in various papyri. The material in this latter group proves that the ritual was practised extensively in a variety of contexts, and not confined either to Thebes or to the mortuary cult.

From both types of sources it appears that the ritual was performed on a large number of objects: on statues of gods, of dead men and of living kings,¹ on mummies and coffins, on Apis bulls,² on temples,³ on sacred boats⁴ and amulets,⁵ and on names.⁶ It

* In the article I am referring to some Theban tombs which have not been published. I base my observations on my own notes and pictures. The tombs are referred to by the numbers cited in Porter and Moss: *Topographical Bibliography, The Theban Necropolis Part 1*, Oxf. 1960. In this connection I want to thank Vice Minister for Antiquities in Cairo, Dr. Gamal Moukhtar, the officers of Antiquity Service, and Dr. Lanny Bell of the University of Pennsylvania for valuable assistance in enabling me to get access to the tombs.

¹ E. Schott, "Das Goldhaus unter König Pepi II", *Göttinger Miszellen* 9 (1974), p. 33 ff. The Opening is performed on a statue of the king on occasion of his *sed*-feast.

² Chassinat, *Recueil de Travaux* 21 (1899), p. 72; Spiegelberg, "Ein Bruchstück des Bestattungsrituals der Apistiere", *AZ* 56 (1920), p. 1 ff.

³ Chassinat, *Le temple d'Edfou* IV, 330 f.; Blackman and Fairman, "The Consecration of an Egyptian temple according to the Use of Edfu", *JEA* 32 (1946), p. 75 ff.

⁴ Goyon, *Rituels funéraires de l'ancienne Égypte*, Paris 1972, p. 90.

⁵ Naville, *Pap. of Joniā*, Lond. 1908, pl. XII, kap. 151; Lexa, *La magie dans l'Égypte antique* II, Paris 1925, p. 53.

further appears that the ritual was performed on different occasions: in the embalming workshop at the termination of mummification;⁷ in the workshop where statues, coffins, and other cult requisites were made, as a conclusion to the work;⁸ and, finally, in various sanctuaries on statues of gods as well as of dead men, performed either on a single occasion or on successive ones.

As this is a ritual which in its main features remains the same in all these different applications, the natural task of research has been to find the common basis of all these uses, or in other words the fundamental idea of the ritual as a whole. What characterizes most of these attempts at a comprehensive understanding is that one particular application of the ritual is considered a primary one, while all the other uses are understood as derivations from it. Usually this approach has been linked with a historicistic understanding of the ritual: The meaning is sought with reference to what is regarded as its primary object from a chronological point of view. The choice has been one between the statue and the mummy. Budge, for example, was of the opinion that the ritual was primarily performed on the mummy and secondarily "upon a statue, which represented it";⁹ this is because he regards the fundamental idea of the ritual to be a recreation of the faculties belonging to the living body.¹⁰ Morenz, on the other hand, chooses the statue as the point of departure; he thinks that the idea of the ritual was primarily to animate the statue, from which it "sich leicht . . . versteht, dass das Ritual dann auch an der Mumie vollzogen wurde".¹¹ With regard to these approaches it must be pointed out that basing our understanding of the ritual on its chronologically primary use is unsatisfactory when the aim is to find a common denominator for all applications documented from the NK and onwards. For this purpose the chronologically primary meaning of the ritual is irrelevant. The drawback to the historicistic approaches is that they do not seriously consider the semantic obscurities and lacunae that arise when the various uses of the ritual are all understood on the basis of the supposed primary one.

⁶ The tomb of queen Tauseret (The Valley of the Kings 14).

⁷ Theban tombs 219, 335.

⁸ Theban tomb 217.

⁹ *Egyptian magic*, Lond. 1899, p. 192.

¹⁰ *The Book of the Dead*, N.Y. 1966, p. 246.

¹¹ *Aegyptische Religion*, Stuttg. 1960, p. 163.

In line with the attempts to understand the ritual as a whole Otto has reconstructed a "complete" text comprising 75 scenes.¹² Most representations comprise far fewer, however. As the various representations differ greatly in length, we shall have to make room for the possibility that this fact is conditioned by different versions of the ritual; at any rate the variations in length should not be exclusively ascribed to artistic or economic concerns.

It is important to find a meaning for the ritual taken as a whole, a basic meaning underlying all performances and which can explain the purpose of them all. But, considering the fact that objects and occasions vary considerably, it is equally important to ask whether the ritual had different specific meanings in the respective performances. We cannot postulate *a priori* that the ritual had exactly the same meaning and purpose in all types of application. On the contrary, we have to reckon with the possibility that there was some complexity within the unit. I want to tackle especially this question of a complexity of meanings and purposes. It is methodologically necessary for this task to establish principles of interpretation that can elicit the common fundamental idea while at the same time exposing the specific meanings. A concept will be required that can explain the general purpose of the ritual, and also the specific purposes of each individual performance.

The most common interpretation of the ritual has been expressed in the concept of "animation":¹³ The ritual is supposed to "animate" the object, transform it from dead matter to the status of being alive. This definition is obviously correct; and considering the special position which the notion of "life", "living", occupies in Egyptian religion, it can also be said to be a congenial one. Its disadvantage is that when taken in the wider sense it is too vague or rather non-informative, while taken in the more restricted sense it can be used in connection with one type of object only, namely the anthropo- or theriomorphic one. — The same kind of objection has to be levelled

¹² *Das ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, Wiesb. 1960.

¹³ Blackman: "These acts were supposed to open not only the mouth of the statue, but the eyes and ears as well, indeed endow it with the faculties of a living person" ("The Rite of Opening the Mouth in Ancient Egypt and Babylonia", JEA 10 (1924), p. 55). — Morenz: "Wir kennen es unter dem Namen 'Mundöffnung'; tatsächlich hat es aber den Zweck, alle Organe gebrauchsfähig und damit lebendig zu machen" (*Agyptische Religion*, Stuttg. 1960, p. 163).

against the definition of "sacralization".¹⁴ It is without doubt in harmony with Egyptian cultic thought, but taken in its wider sense it is as good as tautological (most of what is done in any religion aims at sacralization); in a more restricted sense it runs the danger of being too specific if "sacralization", in the more precise meaning, is taken to mean that something demonic is transformed into something divine.

We will be best served by a general definition which takes into account all types of object, while allowing for their individual characteristics as regards religious function: the purpose of the ritual should also be understood in relation to the distinguishing features of its specific employment. A closer study of the material satisfying this requirement will show that the most suitable general definition of what the ritual is supposed to effect is to make the object operative, i.e. in a cultic sense. Inherent in the definition is the question of what this actually means in the case under consideration. In this article I shall content myself with demonstrating the validity of the approach in only one sector of the material, namely the ritual as applied in the mortuary context.

The main objects of concern in this context are the dead man's statue, his mummy, and his coffin. These objects have different functions in the mortuary cultus, and we shall see how this fact conditions the meaning and purpose of the ritual.

I.

To be precise, the dead man could have several statues. They were in different places and can on this criterium be divided into two groups: those that were accessible to the living and those that were not, these latter being placed in the burial chamber or in other closed rooms.¹⁵ As the function of the hidden statues has not yet been satisfactorily explained, we shall not consider this group.

Of the accessible statues the most important one was that which received the regular food offerings. This statue frequently represented

¹⁴ Bjerke: It is "possible to isolate a somewhat vague common semantic core, perhaps as 'sacralization', and 'endowment with life'" ("Remarks on the Egyptian Ritual of 'Opening the Mouth' and its Interpretation", *Numerus* 12 (1965), p. 213).

¹⁵ Bonnet, *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*, Berl. 1952, p. 118.

the dead man as being seated. It was placed in the shrine. An example of this type of statue is in Theban tomb 49. In the shrine of this tomb there are statues representing the owner of the tomb and his spouse;¹⁶ they are dressed for a banquet, wearing wigs and festal cones on their heads and clothed in pleated garments—these latter softening the natural rigour of a statue and creating an impression of life and motion. The wife has her arm under her husband's, a trait which adds to the life-like impression. To all appearances the statues correspond to the not satisfactorily preserved pictures in the same tomb depicting the couple as seated before the offering table.¹⁷

The accessible statues can also represent the dead man standing. In the tombs there are statues of this type pictured in various cultic situations, such as offerings,¹⁸ processions,¹⁹ and boat outings.²⁰

The primary function of all accessible statues was to serve as a link between the living and the dead. The dead man's statue is in this respect analogous to a god's statue. The god's statue is a means of communication: Through acts directed towards it contact is attained with the divine being. Or to put it in another way: The statue embodies the cultic presence of the divine being, in this concrete body the god "lives" on earth; the communicating acts—the early morning rites, the offering of food, etc.—constitute the cultic "life" of the god. The presence of the god has materialized in the statue and the rites surrounding it. The same idea lies behind the statue of the dead man. The dead man is a transcendent being like the god²¹ and can be met in the statue; it represents his earthly life. It should be borne in mind that the tomb is not solely a place for depositing the corpse, but a sanctuary where the living can meet a transcendent being as if

¹⁶ There are four additional statues, nameless and grouped in pairs.

¹⁷ Davies, *The Tomb of Neferhotep*, N.Y. 1933, e.g. pl. XXV.

¹⁸ E.g. in Theban tomb 100.

¹⁹ In Theban tombs 69 and 130 the dead man is depicted as he leaves the tomb to participate in an Amon-procession; see Schott, "Das schöne Fest vom Wüstental", *Akad. d. Wiss. u. d. Lit.* 11 (1952), Wiesb. 1953, p. 33. The inscription runs (in Schott's translation): "Aus der Erde hervorkommen, Re zu sehen und Amon zu folgen an seinem schönen Fest vom Wüstental".

²⁰ Theban tomb 51, see Davies, *Two Ramesside Tombs*, N.Y. 1927, pl. XVI; Theban tomb 19, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altäg. Kulturgeschichte*, Taf. 118.

²¹ The analogy is explained by the fact that in Egyptian religious thought death was a mode of transcendence.

it were living on earth.²² Among the communicating acts offering is also in this case the most important one.²³ The types of offering include gifts of food and also meals in which the whole family takes part and eats together with the dead.²⁴ The other rites surrounding the dead man's statue have similar associations with earthly life:²⁵ the boat outings on a pond or the river, the participation in processions.

Since the dead man had several statues we shall have to ask a question that is seldom put: Was the Opening performed on one or more statues?

Pictures of the ritual show that the Opening could be performed on statues representing the dead man standing as well as seated. In the lengthiest representations the dead man is depicted as standing: to all appearances it is the portable cult statue which is pictured in so many different situations. When the object is a statue that represents the dead man seated, the table laid with offerings is as a rule placed in front of it.²⁶ The combination of the seated dead man and the offering table is a criterion which identifies the statue: This is the statue that receives the regular food offerings. Usually only one

²² According to inscriptions celebrations were held in the tomb and the dead man participated (Schott, *op. cit.*, p. 81). These feasts were important events to the living, cf. Schott: "Was die Totenstadt und ihr Fest den Lebenden bedeute, können wir kaum ermessen. Sie wird in Liedern und Hymnen besungen und als Gebet der Wahrheit geschildert, zu dem kein Sünder Zutritt hat (p. 92).

²³ The offerings should be understood first and foremost with regard to this need for contact with the dead man; by "nourishing" his earthly life the offerings enable him to live on earth, so that he can be met by the living. The offerings should not be regarded as a way of sustaining his existence in the beyond, they are meant for his earthly life, i.e. his *ka*-life. This is apparent from offering formulas that explicitly state that the offerings are for the dead man's *ka*; see Davies, *The Tomb of Two Sculptors*, N.Y. 1925, p. 35, cf. too pl. XXVII, which depicts the offering table in the form of *ka*-arms accepting the food gifts.

²⁴ Cf. Davies' typology of the representations of banquets in *The Tomb of Two Sculptors*, p. 52 f.

²⁵ Inscriptions make it apparent that the dead man is thought to live an earthly life; he attends the feast "in der Weise des auf Erden seins" (Schott, *op. cit.* inscr. 111); cf. too the following words from Theban tomb 78, directed to the dead man on the occasion of the mortuary feast: "Verbringe einen Feiertag froh und guter Dinge, indem du Amon siehst, der dich weilen lässt unter den Irdischen, du Begnadeter auf der Erde der Lebenden" (Wreszinski, *op. cit.* Taf. 39).

²⁶ There are exceptions to the rule, e.g. in Theban tomb 81, which has a representation of the Opening performed on a statue of the dead man seated without an offering table.

type of statue is depicted in the representation of the ritual in a given tomb. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that the ritual was performed on only one statue at the funeral in question; there is the possibility that the depiction is intended to represent a plurality of performances. In a few tombs both types of statue are depicted undergoing the ritual,²⁷ a fact which proves that there could at least be two performances. In this case too, we shall have to consider the possibility that the picture presents typical performances rather than actual ones, and that it can refer to more than two statues. According to what criteria the pictures should be interpreted is, however, a problem that has to be solved by taking into consideration artistical, practical, economic, and social circumstances; and these can, moreover, change with time and place.

The question, then, is: What is the ritual supposed to effect when its object is a statue? The answer is not determined solely by the specific functions of the statue; there is an additional determining factor, namely the occasion of the performance. As has already been mentioned the Opening could be performed on the statue in the workshop as a conclusion to the work, and there could also be repeated performances.

Since this circumstance is bound up with the purpose of the ritual we will reformulate our question: What is the ritual supposed to effect when performed for the first time upon the statue, and—when repeated?

When the ritual is performed for the first time, as a conclusion to the making of the statue, it bestows a general operative competence as a medium of communication with the beyond. Only when the Opening has been performed is the statue ready for use. In this case the definition of “animation” in the more precise meaning could be applied to the Opening. One could say that the statue is transformed from lifeless substance to a “cultic body”; from now on the dead man can “live” among the living through his statue. It is the basic idea of being “animated” that lies behind all the rites involving the statue; they all presuppose a conception of life. Through the first Opening the statue is made operative for all occasions where it functions as the dead man’s living body.

²⁷ Theban tomb 35.

In connection with the idea of the animated statue a remark might be interjected concerning a peculiarity found in some of the pictures of the ritual. Sometimes the dead man is depicted as if he were alive; his skin is tanned, he wears up-to-date clothes, he is often together with his spouse who also looks as if she were living. They can be pictured thus seated²⁸ before the offering table as well as standing.²⁹ The theory has been put forward that these pictures represent not the statue of the dead man but the dead man "himself"—whatever this might imply. Otto maintains this point of view, though he formulates it somewhat vaguely; he sees in some of these pictures the dead man depicted as receiver of "die Wirkung des Rituals".³⁰ In contrast to this view it might be maintained that it is more likely that it is the statue which is depicted, conceived as "living", functioning as the cultic body of the dead man. It should be recalled that the dead man's statue can be lifelike in posture and expression, in dress and accoutrement. Moreover, the situation depicted in these pictures is on most occasions clearly cultic. A priest performs the ritual act; the figures are placed on a mound of sand, this being prescribed for statues that are to pass through the ritual.³¹ In a sense it is the dead man who is depicted, but not as being in the beyond; on the contrary, he is represented as living and earthly, in other words it is his animated statue that is depicted: In one way only can the dead man lead an earthly, physical life; this is in his statue when its mouth has been "opened". It is, therefore, not surprising that statues can represent the dead man as he was when alive, nor that pictures of the statues try to express the thought that these are statues that "live".

The repetitions of the Opening took place on special occasions: e.g. at the annual mortuary feast, the Feast of the Valley. Reference can be made to Davies' investigations.³² During the celebrations the statue played the central role in a number of rites; a statue was taken

²⁸ Theban tombs 296, 359.

²⁹ Theban tombs 96, 178.

³⁰ Otto, *op. cit.*, p. 29 f.; cf. too Bjerke, "Remarks on the Egyptian Ritual of 'Opening the Mouth' and its Interpretation", *Numerus* 12 (1965), pp. 203 f., 205, 214.

³¹ Theban tomb 178.

³² *The Tomb of Two Sculptors*, N.Y. 1925, p. 46; *The Tomb of Rekh-mi-re^c*, N.Y. 1943, p. 78; see too Schott, "Das schöne Fest vom Wüstentale", *Akad. d. Wiss. u. d. Lit.* 11 (1952), Wiesb. 1935, p. 38.

out of the tomb and carried in an Amon-procession;³³ a statue also participated in a banquet.³⁴—The ritual may also have been performed in connection with the regular food offerings;³⁵ the many pictures showing the ritual being performed on the statue representing the dead man at the offering table point in this direction. The idea is also reflected in those representations which introduce the offering table in the concluding picture/pictures. In these instances we can defend the opinion that the purpose of the Opening is to enable the statue to receive the offerings.

Whether the repetition of the Opening took place before or after this reuse of the statue is difficult to ascertain from the texts alone. Here the question as to the purpose of the ritual is therefore of decisive importance. It has been suggested that the statue underwent the ritual after having participated in the procession of the Feast of the Valley;³⁶ thus the purpose is understood as being of a purifying kind. However, it is more likely that it was performed before the statue was made use of—before the procession, before the acceptance of the offerings. It might be assumed that the purpose of these repeated performances, too, was linked up with the transformation of the statue substance to a cultic body through which the dead man could join in the feast. We can find support for this view in the pictures which show the Opening being performed on statues at the offering table: The table is laden with gifts, they have not been cleared away; everything indicates that the ritual is performed to enable the dead man to enjoy the gifts. The statue might very well have been purified after having participated in the procession, but this is another matter.

The repeated performances are indicative of a need to renew the “animation” that was obtained at the first performance; there is, nevertheless, a difference between the first performance and the successive ones. It lies in the nature of things that the purpose of the latter is more particularized than that of the former, as it is

³³ Schott, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

³⁴ Davies, *The Tomb of Rekh-mi-re^c*, N.Y. 1943, p. 78.

³⁵ With regard to the importance of repetition of ritual, Blackman's opinions on its significance in Egyptian cultus can be referred to, see “The House of the Morning”, JEA 5 (1918), esp. p. 160. He seems to have hit upon an essential notion.

³⁶ Schott, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

promoted by the specific cultic demand in question—the offering, the procession or whatever might require the use of the statue.

The repeated performances appear to have been of a simpler kind than the first performance. Representations depicting the ritual performed on statues at the offering table are short. Here there is a correlation between the object (statue at the offering table) and the length of the representation, and it cannot be fully explained by assuming that these short representations are abbreviated representations of the ritual.³⁷ Theban tomb 35 contains both a short and a long representation; they conform to the correlation noted, the long representation having a statue portraying the dead man standing as object (Otto's type I) and the short one having the statue at the offering table (Otto's type III). This leads one to infer that the latter representation refers to a shorter version of the ritual, for the regular offerings, than does the longer representation.

We are here once again in touch with the fundamental problem of the relationship between the ritual and the representations of it. Whatever our conception of this problem, we cannot assume as a matter of course that the short representations are abbreviated representations that refer to a ritual of the same length as the one referred to by the long representations. On the other hand, neither can we take for granted that the longest representations—e.g. the one in Theban tomb 100, which forms the basis of Otto's reconstruction—refer to one, single version or performance. It is just possible that these representations refer to two or more separately performed Openings. It is documented that different Openings really could be combined in one single representation, e.g. in Theban tomb 139. There is no doubt that this representation does contain such a combination as the object of the ritual changes from statue to mummy. But the point is that the change is not indicated; the scenes follow consecutively as if presenting one, single performance. In the representations that have only the statue as object, combinations of this kind can be as-

³⁷ Otto does not regard these pictures (those conforming to his type III) as ritual representations at all, but sees them as depictions of the dead man receiving the effect of the ritual (*op. cit.* II, p. 29). As these pictures present the main rite of ritual—the actual “opening” act—and as they in other respects too can be said to refer to a cultic situation, there is no reason why they should not be ritual representations, though of a simple version of the ritual.

certained only when there is a change from the statue portraying the dead man standing to the one portraying him seated. The combining of different performances in one and the same representation should make us cautious in identifying the pictures in the longest representations. Perhaps the ritual was not duplicating and reiterating the acts so excessively as these seem to imply.³⁸ True, we have information from a late period³⁹ that the Opening in a certain case lasted for four days; but it is doubtful whether this should be taken to mean that one single performance lasted for four days. More likely several performances were carried out during these days—on various statues, on coffins, on the mummy.

II.

While the statue embodies the cultic presence of the dead man, the mummy is the pre-condition of the dead man's cultic relevance. The mummification is a divinization, a transmutation of the human body to a god's body. From a religious point of view the mummification is no conservation of the human body but rather the opposite: The mummification is a ritual transformation of the human and mortal to the divine and eternal. The cultic significance of the mummy thus lies in its function as a symbol of Osiris.

The Opening should be understood against the background of this ritual and mythic function of the mummy. The ritual should in this case, as well as in the case of the statue, be related to the cultic function of the object. The ritual makes the mummy operative, in the sense that the mummy can function as a symbol of Osiris. The basic importance of this symbol lies in its reference to the deified dead man who is sought in the ritual acts. Hidden in the burial chamber the mummy represents this divine being who is met in the shrine in the statue. Thus the tomb is like a temple of Osiris.⁴⁰

³⁸ Cf. Otto's reconstruction.

³⁹ See Sethe, *Hieroglyphische Urkunden der griechisch-römische Zeit*, Leipzig, 1904 (Steindorff, *Urkunden des ägypt. Altertums* II), p. 40.

⁴⁰ The dead man receives his offerings in the name of Osiris, this is apparent from offering formulas such as the following from Theban tomb 39 (in Davies' translation): "... thousands of bread and beer, meat and fowl, roast shoulders and cut... on which a god lives, doubly pure offerings of a god for Osiris-Puyemre" (Davies, *The Tomb of Puyemre* II, N.Y. 1923, p. 20).

What the ritual achieves with regard to the mummy is, then, to make it function as a symbol of a dead god.⁴¹ Hence to characterize the function of the Opening as "animation" is out of place here unless we wish to express ourselves in a mythical way as do the religious texts, and this should not be our objective if we want to bring out the different cultic functions of the different cultic symbols. The mummy represents a d e a d being. If, in spite of this fact, we persist in using the word "animated" to characterize the effect obtained by the ritual, the word does not have, in this connection, its usual reference; it does not refer to earthly life. The statue relates to earthly life. The mummy represents a different ontological state. This fact is reflected by the construction of the tomb: The burial chamber is closed to the living, it belongs to the world beyond; the shrine belongs to this world, it is open to the living—and to the dead man when conceived as a terrestrial phenomenon, living in the statue.⁴²

The relationship between the mummy and the statue should be understood within this cultic functionalistic framework, and the performance of the Opening on both objects should, correspondingly, be understood as inaugurations for different functions: Carried out on the statue the ritual makes this symbol of earthly life operative for ritual communication between the living and the dead man, while carried out on the mummy it makes this symbol of a dead god operative for divine residence in the sanctuary in question. The dead man has already, through the mummification been transformed to Osiris; the purpose of the Opening is to make this Osiris cultic relevant. In this respect the Opening when performed on the mummy has a function that corresponds to the consecration of a cult statue. But in view of a common misunderstanding it might not be inappropriate to state explicitly that the statue in the shrine is no substitute in a more durable material for the frail mummified body.⁴³ The statue and the

⁴¹ Once again we would like to draw attention to the special meaning which death had to the Egyptians as an expression of transcendence; the idea of a dead god has to be understood with this background.

⁴² See footnote 25.

⁴³ Blackman: "But since the early mummies were extremely perishable and unlielike in appearance, it was thought desirable to supply the deceased with a new body, more durable and realistic than the corpse, namely a portrait statue" ("Sacramental Ideas and Usages in Ancient Egypt", *Recueil de Travaux* 39 (1921), p. 48). — Černy: The statue is "a more durable and lifelike substitute

mummy both represent the dead man, but from different aspects. The statue is associated with the *ka*-life of the deified dead man, it represents his earthly life. The mummy is associated with the *ba*-life of the dead man, it represents his transcendent life, his life in the beyond. The statue is dependent upon the mummy only in so far as without the apotheosis there would have been no sense in making a statue because it wold have had no Osiris to refer to and give a cultic life to.⁴⁴

There is no repeated performance of the Opening when the mummy is the object of the ritual, as regular communication is not the function of the mummy. But pictures show that it could undergo the ritual in the embalming workshop as well as outside the tomb, immediately before it was taken to the burial chamber.⁴⁵

III.

The function of the coffin is to protect the mummy. Thus it also preserves the sanctity of the mummy and in doing this participates in this sanctity. Its participation in the sanctity of the mummy is reflected in the anthropoid shape of the coffin: It looks like a mummy, it looks like the god. In the case of the Osirian coffin it might be correct to say that it is a more lasting embodiment of the

for the dead body" (*op. cit.*, p. 102). — Ranke: In the statue the dead man was "supposed to maintain an existence and to be preserved from annihilation even if his human body should perish" ("The Origin of the Egyptian Tomb Statue", *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 28 (1935), p. 46); it is Ranke's opinion that the statue is a place of resort "in which the soul may find refuge in case the body should perish in spite of utmost precaution" (*ibid.*, p. 45). — Blackman thinks the purpose of the Opening was to identify the statue with the body: "To identify the statue with the king's body a rite was performed called the Opening of the Mouth" ("Sacramental Ideas and Usages in Ancient Egypt", p. 48), and "The statue had to be identified with the body of the dead king. The rite by which that was accomplished was the so-called Opening of the Mouth" ("The House of the Morning", p. 159).

⁴⁴ From this relationship between the statue and Osiris the many "Osirian" elements in the ritual can be explained, even when the statue is its object; they do not necessarily have to be explained as a relic from a primary use of the ritual on the mummy. — The historical relationship between the statue and the mummy as objects of the Opening, has yet to be clarified.

⁴⁵ Often the mourners are depicted waiting while the ritual is being performed. These representations are simple, the course of events can be compressed into one single picture. As several "opening" instruments are depicted on the table before the priest, the ritual must have been of a certain length also in these instances.

apotheosized dead man; the mummy-like coffin is made of a more durable material than the frail human body, and is a guarantee of duration for the mummy. It can be made of gold—the metal of eternal, divine life—and as an additional expression of duration it can be tripled.⁴⁶ Thus it is a symbol of eternal, divine life; this is the mythical meaning of the protecting and preserving function of the coffin.

With this the coffin too, like the mummy, and in contrast to the statue, refers to the dead man from the aspect of the beyond.

The purpose of the Opening, then, should also in the case of the coffin be understood against the background of its function. The ritual is supposed to qualify the coffin for its function of preserving the most prominent symbol present; it implies a perpetuation of the mummy, which on the mythical level means that the deity will remain in the sanctuary.

As was the case with the mummy, the ritual is not repeated when the coffin is its object because the function of the coffin is not to mediate the regular communicating acts. It is a symbol of the beyond and as such it is placed where the living have no access.—The pictures show that the Opening could take place in the workshop.⁴⁷

IV.

In trying to determine the meaning and purpose of the Opening I have sought for clues in the concrete objects of the ritual. We should seek for the meaning and purpose of any ritual first and foremost in the concrete objects to which the ritual is directed. True, the objects we have considered are symbols that all refer to the same transcendent being, so that from a mythical and theological point of view it is this transcendent being to which the ritual relates in every instance. But a ritual should not primarily, least of all exclusively, be understood on the basis of its mythical and theological implications. The concept of the dead man as a transcendent being is a mythical concept; by saying that the object of the concrete ritual acts is the dead man in the beyond, we understand this act in its mythical sense. But the ritual *qua* ritual should be understood on its specifically ritual premises. Thus understood its meaning is to be found in what happens at the concrete level, with concrete things. The object of the Opening

⁴⁶ Like that of Tutankhamon.

⁴⁷ Theban tomb 217.

from the ritual point of view is the statue, the mummy, the coffin. All three kinds of object represent the dead man; but the dead man "himself" is no ritual phenomenon and does not belong to the ritual order. In the ritual situation we have to do with concrete symbols representing the dead man. The ritual aims at an effect on these concrete symbols. They have their own individual ritual functions. What object is undergoing the ritual in any given case, even if all objects represent the dead man, is therefore not without significance for our understanding of what is happening.

It is important in any theoretical understanding of the ritual to draw this line of demarcation between the dead man "himself" and his cultic representations. Having done this, it will be necessary to refute the point of view that the concrete objects have no influence of their own upon the meaning of the ritual because they are all only representations of the same dead man. The view has been clearly and consistently presented by Bjerke. He regards the Opening as the concluding ceremony of a *rite de passage* (i.e. all mortuary ceremonies) the purpose of which is to carry the dead man to the realm of the beyond. Only when the Opening has been performed is the dead man ultimately fixed in the beyond.⁴⁸ The theory that the Opening is part of a *rite de passage* is a fertile one, but when Bjerke concludes that it makes little sense to understand the ritual on the basis of the individual concrete objects, as they have all only a representative value, this conclusion is due to a fusion between the mythical implication of all three objects and their ritual functions. It might be of great importance even to the interpretation of the ritual as a *rite de passage* to ascertain whether the variety of concrete objects entails changes in the meaning of the ritual. The view that it makes no difference which object is chosen⁴⁹ prevents one from finding out.—As noted above, it is documented that the ritual could be performed on more than one object in the same mortuary cult. This seems to back our theoretical position. If the object had no

⁴⁸ "Only when the ritual of 'Opening the Mouth' has been performed has his position ultimately been fixed in the beyond" *op. cit.*, p. 215.

⁴⁹ "Against this background it is not difficult to understand the variation in depicted objects of the ritual in the texts. What is common to all of them is that they refer to the dead man, not to the statue or the mummy. Seen from this point of view it does not matter which, statue or mummy, is selected as object, they both refer to the dead man" *ibid.*

individual bearing upon the ritual it would have sufficed to perform it on one object alone. Apparently the objects did have a significance of their own.

As regards the view that the ritual is part of a *rite de passage*, it should be mentioned that the very divergency in cultic function of the different objects concerned appears to contradict this. If the purpose of the ritual was to fix the dead man ultimately in the beyond, it may be asked why it was performed on the cult statue; the only logical object would have been the mummy. The performance on the cult statue cannot be satisfactorily explained within this frame of interpretation. The statue's function of embodying divine earthly presence has to be taken into consideration. If we expand the scope of the context on this point the inadequacy of the view will be even more apparent: The interpretation of the Opening as part of a *rite de passage* can be applied only in a mortuary context; as to the cultus of a god, it is hardly likely that the ritual effects a fixing in the beyond of the god represented by the statue. The purpose of the ritual is rather to evoke the god, call him down to earth, by transforming the statue to a divine body into which the god can "enter" to "live"; in other words exactly the reverse of being fixed in the beyond—the god has now become a terrestrial phenomenon. As the Egyptians themselves have drawn clear analogies between the performances on statues of gods and statues of dead men,⁵⁰ it is most likely that the ritual had the same basic purpose in both instances, namely that of giving earthly existence to the sacred beyond. It is here, once again, important to bear in mind that the tomb has cultic functions; it is a sanctuary, a meeting place for the living and the dead, where the statue is the mediator of this meeting. Fixing the dead man in the beyond is of decisive importance for this cult; however, it is not effected through the Opening but rather through the mummification, the "Osirification". The mummification might be called a *rite de passage*.

The ritual relates to the dead man, but the formulation "the dead man himself" cannot be used in our formal analysis. We shall have to define the dead man with regard to precise cultic relations. The question to be asked is: In what sense does the ritual relate to the

⁵⁰ For instance in utterances of the type: "Your mouth is opened with a chisel of *bja*, with which the mouth of all gods is opened"; see Otto, *op. cit.* II, p. 196.

dead man; i.e. what aspect of the dead man is referred to in the performance in question? The answer has been given through our attempt at defining the effect of the ritual on the concrete objects. These objects represent the dead man in different ways by symbolizing his different cultic aspects. When the statue is the object, attention is directed to the dead man's continued life on earth, an aspect that has its mythical expression in the concept of his *ka*.⁵¹ In this case the ritual has a general hierophanizing function. The deified man is being incarnated and thus rendered cultically accessible through animating his statue with his *ka*. If his *ka* cannot resort to a statue, the dead man does not live an earthly life of the kind implied by the concept of *ka*. When the mummy is the object, attention is directed to the transcendental aspect of the dead man. The ritual has an evocative function: The Osiris is called from the beyond to a presence in the sanctuary. This aspect of the dead man is mythically expressed by the concept of his *ba* that flies like a bird from the closed burial chamber.⁵² In this case the presence of the dead man is not confined to the cultic acts and is therefore not incarnated in any special symbol in the shrine, but is thought to exist everywhere in the burial area—including the shrine.⁵³ When the coffin is the object the Opening has a confirmatory function: It means a safeguarding of this holy presence in the sanctuary.

I have tried to show that it is possible to reach a more precise understanding of the Opening when its meaning is sought in relation to the individual functional characteristics of its concrete objects. I selected my examples from the mortuary context; the approach can be adopted in the other contexts as well. When inspected in the light of the various cultic functions of objects belonging to the cult of gods—such as temples, statues, sacred boats, Apis bulls—the meaning of the Opening will diffract into a similar spectrum.

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⁵¹ See footnote 23.

⁵² Naville, *Das aegyptische Todtenbuch*, Berl. 1886, vignette to ch. 1, Louvre III, 36.

⁵³ In some depictions of the Opening performed on the mummy outside the tomb the *ba* of the dead man sits nearby watching the events; pictures can also depict the *ba* in the shrine, being present when the offerings are administered. (Theban tomb 19).

THE CLICHÉ AS RITUAL AND INSTRUMENT
ICONIC PUNS IN KAMPAN'S *IRĀMAVATĀRAM*

Perhaps the supreme achievement of Tamil letters, and certainly one of the great works of the world's religious literature, is Kampan's version of the Hindu epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa*. No creation of Tamil poets has ever been so passionately loved as Kampan's *Irāmāvatāram*; and Kampan himself is regarded by the Tamils as the greatest of their poets, a man so divinely gifted that he was able to compose all 10,000 verses of the work in the space of a mere two weeks. According to the Tamil proverb, 'in Kampan's house even a post for tying cattle would speak in verse'.¹ Despite its place in Tamil culture, however, the *Irāmāvatāram* has never been translated into any Western language; indeed, the work is hardly known outside South India.² Even the professional interest of Indologists in Kampan's poem has, on the whole, been limited to observing the differences between this *Rāmāyaṇa* and the Sanskrit prototype ascribed to Vālmīki. As we shall see, Kampan has not so much adapted a Sanskrit classic into Tamil as created a new classic of his own, in which one finds a perspective characteristic of Tamil devotional religion in its most mature stage. It is, in fact, the poet's success in capturing a religious attitude basic to his culture which, to my mind, best explains the immense popularity of his work. It is the purpose of this paper to explore the nature of this success. In so doing we shall be led to consider questions related to the self-view of the individual in traditional Tamil culture.

It is perhaps fitting, in the light of this goal, to note at the outset how little we know of the individual history of the poet himself. As usual with Tamil literary figures of the pre-modern period, our knowledge of Kampan is derived almost entirely from fragments of legendary hagiography, i.e., from a mass of floating traditions which

¹ Kampan vīṭtu kkaṭtutariyum kaviccollum.

² Kampan's fame was not limited to the Tamil region, however; the *Irāmāvatāram* seems to have been popular in the Kannada area and in Kerala. See K. Zvelebil, *The Smile of Murugan, On Tamil Literature of South India* (Leiden, 1973), p. 209.

have, over the centuries, become centered on this particular figure.³ We do not even know for sure what his name signifies: some stories connect it with a region, the Kampanātu; others with *kampu*, ‘bulrush millet’, or *kampam* (Sanskrit *stambha/skambha*), ‘pillar’. The poet may have been named after (E)Kampan-Śiva, the god of Kāñcipuram. The only sure fact about the poet is that he was patronized by one Cataiyappan, whom the praises in every thousandth verse. A consideration of all the available evidence suggests that Kampan may have lived during the 12th century;⁴ it is at any rate certain that his work was produced during the period of the Imperial Cholas, during which time Tamil civilization attained a new peak of maturity and harmony. Legends connect him with other figures attached to the Chola court, such as the royal poet Öṭṭakkūttar, who lived during the 12th century.

Kampan was not the first to attempt a *Rāmāyaṇa* in Tamil,⁵ but no-one has ever tried to supersede *his* version. The poet refers to his source, Vālmīki, in verse 6 of the *tarcirappupāyiram*:

The world will despise me,
and the fault will be mine.
Why, then, did I sing this song?
Only to make known the splendour of the divine verses
Uttered by him of unerring wisdom
And the gift of poetry.

Nevertheless, Kampan’s work is strikingly different from Vālmīki’s in a number of ways. The Sanskrit work belongs to the genre of epic verse,⁶ while the *Irāmāvatāram* is essentially a *kāvya*, in which individual lyrical verses are strung together to form a consecutive narrative. One senses an archaic oral basis while reading the Sanskrit epic; Kampan’s verses are polished, sophisticated, and carefully fashioned and were therefore almost certainly written down, even if

³ The stories about Kampan have been collected in Viracāmi cēṭtiyār, *Vinotaracamañcari* (Madras, n.d.), pp. 124-220; T. A. Rajaruthnam Pillai, *Kambar Charitram* (Madras, 1909).

⁴ Zvelebil, p. 208.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 209; cf. George L. Hart, III, *The Poems of Ancient Tamil* (Berkeley, 1975), pp. 60-62.

⁶ Although the *Rāmāyaṇa* is sometimes regarded as the *ādikāvya* by the Sanskrit literary tradition, its affinities lie more with the epic.

the work was intended for oral recitation. There are important differences in the development of the story, although the main line of the narrative is the same in both compositions: ⁷ Rāma is exiled from Ayodhyā at the request of his stepmother, Kaikeyī; his wife Sītā is kidnapped in the forest by Rāvana, the demon-king of Laṅkā; Rāma discovers that Sītā is being held in Laṅkā, crosses over with an army of monkeys and bears, and slays the demon. But there is a truly fundamental difference in attitude toward these events, or toward their hero, a difference hinted at by the poet himself in the apology he offers for his work:

I would say something to those superior poets
 Who have properly studied the ways of Tamil:
 Who would study closely the utterances of
 Madmen (*pittar*), fools (*petaiyar*), or of
 Devotees (*pattar*)? ⁸

The devotee compares himself to madmen and fools, for his mind is wholly invaded by an ‘unreasonable’ passion for his god. Kampaṇ is entirely the devotee, a *bhakta* of Viṣṇu; and while Vālmīki’s Rāma is, in the oldest parts of the epic, essentially heroic, Kampaṇ’s hero is always divine—an avatar of Viṣṇu, who, by the time of Kampaṇ, was for his worshippers the One true god. The *Irāmāvatāram* thus belongs by its very nature to the tradition of South Indian *bhakti*.

It is, I think, fair to say that both the aesthetic ambience and specific poetic techniques used by Kampaṇ have never been adequately analyzed, although Zvelebil has contributed a number of very useful suggestions in this field.⁹ For example, Zvelebil has pointed out the ‘phonoaesthetic’ dimension of Kampaṇ’s verse; and there can be no doubt that Kampaṇ is indeed a master, perhaps the greatest master in the history of Tamil, of sounds as the carriers of suggestion. The brilliance of the language, the rich use of rhyme and alliteration, the mellifluous roll of the verses—these are facts immediately obvious

⁷ For a discussion of variations in plot, see Zvelebil, pp. 212-214.

⁸ *Tarcirappuppāyiram* 8. I have used the edition of Kopālakiruṣnamācāriyar (Madras, 1973) except for the *Ayottiyā kāṇṭam*, which I cite in the edition of Annāmalai University (Madras, 1960).

⁹ Zvelebil, pp. 214-215.

to any reader of the *Irāmāvatāram*, and they no doubt explain something of its success. There is much more to be said about the linguistic mechanisms at work here, but this is not our concern for the moment. Rather, we will be dealing with one of the basic features of the poet's aesthetic world and, to some extent, with the psychology that gives birth to technique. If we fail to penetrate this realm, we shall ultimately fail to appreciate Kampan, or, at any rate, to appreciate the Tamils' appreciation of him. We shall be left to grasp hold of stray metaphors which strike us by their originality or strangeness, or to rely for our pleasure on the particularly well-turned phrase, the subtle use of metre, the hypnotizing effect of the language, etc. All these factors are relevant to understanding the poet, as they would be relevant in the reading of English poetry, for example; but they do not touch the essence of his achievement. They do not explain why one who reads Kampan is so often deeply moved. They fail to bring us into contact with the world-view which Kampan epitomizes, and which transforms the reading of the *Irāmāvatāram* from a mere intellectual exercise into an act of devotion.

The most serious literary 'sin' of which Kampan is accused is probably his dependence on clichés. The *Irāmāvatāram* is a long work, and it is certainly true that in its course the reader encounters the repeated use of stock epithets, hackneyed comparisons, and formulaic metrical units. In this, Kampan is no different from other medieval Tamil poets.¹⁰ Nevertheless, everyone seems agreed on Kampan's superiority to others and, as I have hinted already, I doubt very much that this superiority is simply a matter of technical brilliance. The question of clichés is, in my opinion, of central importance here. I wish to suggest that the cliché may have a characteristic function in medieval Tamil literature, and that Kampan's exploitation of the cliché for his own expressive purposes may provide us with a clue to the nature of his achievement. A few examples may make these propositions clear.

1. Of Umbrellas and the Moon

In the highly conventionalized description of the righteous king, Daśaratha (father of Rāma), we read:

¹⁰ See K. Zvelebil, *Tamil Literature* (Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 151, 157.

That moon which was the umbrella of the king
 waxed ever without waning,
 spread its cool shade over all lives on earth
 and drove away the darkness.
 Thus one could say that the moon in the heavens
 Was superfluous.¹¹

The comparison of the king's umbrella to the moon is a well-known cliché.¹² Kampan accepts the image, even tightens the identification: he says simply *kutaimati*, 'umbrella-moon' (other manuscripts have *matikkutai*, which amounts to the same thing). But let us see where he takes this notion. There is, to begin with, a pun on the word *nilal*, the 'cool shade' which spreads to all living beings; the basic meaning of the word is 'shadow', but it can also refer to the cool light of the moon.¹³ The pun thus sustains our comparison: the moon radiates light, while the umbrella casts shade; both are *nilal*, but they contrast as light contrasts with darkness. Moreover, the moon can hardly dispel the darkness of night, while the *shadow* of the umbrella is said to destroy darkness on earth. The ironic contrast establishes the superiority of the umbrella, which also has the advantage of constancy, never waxing and waning like the object to which it is compared. This gives us a further contrast with the same king's spear (*vel*) and anklet (*kala*), which in the previous verse are said to be worn away—the one by too much sharpening, the other by rubbing against the crowns of subservient kings.¹⁴ The contrast between light and dark thus builds itself into a contrast between the unchanging and the transient. But there is a stronger opposition at work in the verse—that of heaven and earth, which verbally frame the entire image (*mannitai*, 'on earth', is the first word of the verse; *vinnitai*, 'in heaven', is at the spot of greatest poetic tension, the start of the fourth line). The poet has no difficulty in making known his preference for the terrestrial and the tangible over the conventional

¹¹ *Irāmāvatāram* 1.177. The Skt. poeticians would call this trope *pratīpa*.

¹² See e.g., *Cilappatikāram* 1.1-3. *Puranāvūru* 22.11-12.

¹³ Cf. *Viliputtūrar Pāratam* 1.1.3, where the moonlight (*nilal*) heals the poison cast on to the earth by snakes.

¹⁴ Cf. *Raghuvamśa* of *Kālidāsa*, 4.88.

celestial referent; indeed, beginning with the trite identification, he proceeds to turn it on its head and then rule out one member as inferior and even superfluous! In the end, after a kind of poetic *reductio ad absurdum*, the cliché is taken to its limit, and we are left with a single object. Precisely the same process occurs two verses later, where the king's discus (*tikiri*, Sanskrit *cakra*) is compared to the sun which wanders through the world (*ulak'iṭai*) and protects all lives; the discus, too, is One (*ōṇr' ēṇa*). Note that the poet quotes himself: both sun and moon touch all lives (*uyirtōrum*). Here lies the clue to the resolution. There is one moon, the umbrella; one sun, the discus, with its symbolic force as Viṣṇu's attribute serving to adumbrate the imminent birth of Viṣṇu as the king's son, Rāma. Linking the single force which sustains all life in these two verses is the single body embracing the entirety of the living world:

He who had the strength of a lion,
who wore ornaments wrought from diamonds,
cherished all lives as his own;
and thus all life, animate and still,
in this world without blemish,
was as if gathered into one body.¹⁵

All life is united in the person of the king, who stands against death—as the destroyer of enemies, and also as the king who must sheathe his sword because there are no foes left (verses 174 and 180). This, the ultimate opposition hidden behind the others, ends by imparting life even to the inanimate (*cēṇru ninru vāl uyir ēlām*). Moreover, the king as the single source of life is simply one representative of the single divine force operating in the universe. This is an important theme in Kampaṇ's poem. Unity underlies the world of forms: the waters of the river celebrated in the *ārruppaṭalam* rush into gardens, fields, forests, and ponds 'like Life flowing into different bodies' (32), or like the meaning of the Vedas, which was *one* in ancient times but which is now differently stated by many great schools (31).

So the ruling out of one member of the comparison in the example with which we started is not at all fortuitous. These verses taken

¹⁵ *Irāmāvatāram* 1.178.

together describe a movement from division to unity, a movement culminating in the depiction of the king as the embodiment of the single life-force manifest in the kingdom. In addition, the poet has praised this world as superior to the heavenly world of the gods. The two themes are linked: the divine is present in this world in forms which the devotee can recognize. Let us see how the poet treats this crucial process of recognition.

2. *Śrī, Lost and Regained*

The revelation of the god to his worshippers is, in fact, another of Kampaṇ's favorite themes. The *Rāmāyaṇa* as a whole, as the story of Viṣṇu's appearance on earth, might be seen as illustrating this theme; but Kampaṇ tends to favor the more subtle realm of the individual epiphany. We will take an example from the first narrative chapter of the poem, the *Tiruvavatārapaṭalam*. Here the revelation occurs on two levels. The chapter begins with King Daśaratha's complaint to his family priest Vasiṣṭha: he has ruled the world happily for 60,000 years, but now he feels a danger, for he has no son; when he dies, the kingdom will be reduced to anarchy. At this, Vasiṣṭha recalls that Viṣṇu has promised the gods that he will be born on earth as Daśaratha's son. This is the first lesson in hidden truth: Vasiṣṭha prepares the king for the birth of his son, in whom the king is to recognize the lord incarnate. Within this setting is narrated the story of Viṣṇu's promise to the gods, who have been suffering from the depredations of Rāvaṇa. Neither Śiva nor Brahmā is able to act against the demon, because of boons they have granted. The gods' only recourse is thus to turn to Viṣṇu:

“We are helpless to act against that one
who has no glory (*tiruvili*),
with his twenty arms and ten heads;
if the ocean of mercy swelling like a dark cloud
were to fight to remove our disgrace,
only then would be saved”. (190).

Thinking thus, the gods raise their hands in worship and praise Viṣṇu in their hearts. Now comes the moment of revelation:

A dark cloud burst out in lotuses
 the two lights of heaven shining far on either side
 over a hill of gold:
 thus came the god who grants the highest way to those of
 true knowledge,
 upon Garuḍa,
 with lotus-borne Śrī shining by his side. (191-2)

The poet revels in color: Viṣṇu, who is always dark, provides a contrast with the brilliance of his mount, with the moon-like conch, with his discus, which is compared to the sun, and with the lotus which serves as metaphor for his eyes, mouth, hands, navel and feet. These correspondences are stated as an extended simile, but the contrast becomes explicit with the mention of Śrī (Tiru), who is said literally to shine (*pōliya*) by her husband's side. The description as a whole is quite conventional; Viṣṇu is forever being compared by Kampaṇ to a dark cloud (see verse 190 above); the god's hands, feet, eyes, etc. are usually lotuses; Garuḍa (*Kaluṭau*) is frequently a mountain. Indeed, so familiar are these comparisons that the poet need not trouble to explain the image with which he starts; the dark cloud with its lotuses will be recognized at once by every listener. The description is, in other words, hardly removed from an icon, in which standard features receive petrified form. This 'iconization' of poetry is an essential part of the technique we are exploring. Kampaṇ uses stock images to create a ritualized universe, in which the listener is at once aware of the nature of the divine in its relation to himself. Within this conventional order, the poet even draws an explicit moral: the god gives salvation (*parakati*) to those possessed of true knowledge. This is the epiphany rendered secure; the god gives himself to those who already know him, and this knowledge is of the same order as the entrance into the world of the icon, with its fixed harmony and orderly relations. But the experience of the listener is more complex than the above description might suggest. In effect, verses 190-192 adumbrate the entire story of the *Rāmāyana*. The crucial point is the play on the presence or absence of the goddess Śrī. Rāvaṇa, in verse 190, is *tiruvili*, without Śrī; Viṣṇu appears with Śrī shining by his side. Later, in verse 197, the gods address Viṣṇu as "husband of Śrī"—thus emphasizing once again this association. But in the course of the

Rāmāyaṇa, Rāvaṇa will seize Sītā, who is an incarnation of Śrī, and carry her off to Lankā. This is the *casus belli*; the goddess is restored to her husband through war, in which the enemy of the gods is slain. Indeed, the struggle for Śrī is one of the basic themes in the wars of the gods and the demons, not only in the Rāma cycle but in the world of epic myth generally; a well-known story from the *Mahābhārata* describes Śrī's desertion of the demon-king Bali in favor of Indra,¹⁶ while elsewhere she is said to have been insulted by Indra and consequently to have departed from his side.¹⁷ Ultimately these stories have their basis in the agonistic ritual of sacrifice, in which one party transfers the burden of evil, *pāpman*, to the other in order to gain the positive goal of *sṛi*.¹⁸ Precisely this element seems to lie at the heart of the Rāma story; the goddess has replaced the sacrifice which is stolen and regained.¹⁹ Sītā has inherited a very ancient role, and Vālmīki actually makes her draw the comparison herself in a dramatic discussion with her kidnapper: "My husband will soon recover me from you, just as Viṣṇu won back radiant Śrī from the *asuras* with his three steps".²⁰

Kampaṇ's description of Viṣṇu's first appearance to the gods thus turns on a careful use of epithets, which are forced both to assert essential characteristics of the *dramatis personae* and to foreshadow the evolution of the plot. This is what the listener needs to hear: he may enjoy the thrill of the threat which he automatically associates

¹⁶ *MBh* (Southern Recension, Madras, 1931-3), 12.210. Cf. J. Gonda, *Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism* (1954, repr. Delhi, 1969), pp. 223-225; Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology* (Berkeley, 1976), pp. 100, 148.

¹⁷ *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (Bombay, 1866), 1.9.

¹⁸ See J. Heesterman, "Brahmin, Ritual and Renouncer", *WZKSO* 8 (1964), pp. 1-11.

¹⁹ Folk versions of the Rāma myths sometimes make this archaic theme quite explicit. In the *Mayilirāvanayakatai* (Madras, Ar. Ji. Pati Kampēni, 1975), p. 17, Rāvaṇa steals the 'fire which is Sītā'. There is no space to develop this theme here; suffice it to say that the *Rāmāyaṇa* appears to have a substratum of myth connected with the idea of sacrifice—as does the *Mahābhārata* as well. Note that Sītā is discovered by her 'father', Janaka, in a field prepared for sacrifice, and that the bow which Rāma breaks at Sītā's *swayamvara* is the bow which Śiva uses against the gods at Dakṣa's sacrifice, and which seems to symbolize the sacrificial ritual itself: *Rām.* (ed. K. Chinnaswami Sastrigal and V. H. Subrahmanyam Sastry, Madras, 1958), 1.66-67; *MBh* 10.18.

²⁰ *Rām.* 5.21.28-29: apaneṣyati māṁ bhartā tvattah śighram arīḍamah/ asurebhyah śriyam dīptāṁ viṣṇus tribhir iva kramaiḥ//.

with the appearance of Śrī in the Rāma story, while at the same time he is reassured of eternal verities. Rāvaṇa is doomed because he is *tiruvili* by nature; true, he will rob Viṣṇu of Śrī, who appears for the moment so radiantly beside him; but the poet transcends the level of mythic plot and carries his audience to the devotional sphere of inherent and inseparable characteristics or, one might almost say, to an iconography of emotions. The god must always be possessed of Śrī, and it is this conventionalized, iconized attribute which the poet celebrates. This is one function of the stock epithets—they bring us back to the unchanging, secure world we know, even while they may suggest an entire course of events enshrined in myth. Vālmiki's hero suffers a very human fate, a fate which he pursues and in a sense fashions for himself as a man; for Kampān, the entire experience of the story has been transformed into ritual, and the divine protagonist is assured of victory before the battle begins. The description of Śrī in verses 190-192 thus becomes almost a kind of ritual pun, in which the poet plays lovingly with the audience's familiarity with and involvement in the story. He can reveal the ending before he begins, for no secret is here—beyond the ultimate secret of the god's eternal presence, together with all his power and radiance (Śrī), within the worshipper himself.

One sees in the above instance just how rich the Tamil poet's world can be. In contrast with the relatively simple aesthetic world of the Sanskrit epic, the Tamil text is prismatic, complex, internally resonant; by using the tools of conventional description, the poet is able to suggest the presence of several levels of meaning. In this respect—the use of suggestion—Kampān is the direct descendant of the early Tamil poets, whose poetic universe was founded upon elaborate conventions allowing a very complex use of symbolism and suggestion.²¹ The point which needs to be stressed is that in place of the conventions of earlier Tamil poetry Kampān uses the familiar elements of the myth as the backdrop to suggestion; the conventions have given way to the cliché. Surprisingly, the cliché can thus serve to establish a certain distance from the object it describes which, framed by the familiar, can become the subject of the poet's play.

I have said the Kampān seems to break out of the bounds of the

²¹ See Hart, pp. 161-196.

myth he is relating; or, put slightly differently, he is capable of moving from the linear dimension of narrative to a static world of frozen attributes. There is, however, a link between this very faculty and Hindu notions of time—for myth occurs not in historical time, not, that is, in a world of unique, never-recurring constellations of factors, but rather in a mythical time in which events are cyclical and prescribed. Hindu myth, if not static, is at least repetitive, fixed in ever-recurring patterns. Time, including the moment in which man lives, is part of endless cycles with set conjunctions of events. Rāma always appears in the Tretāyuga, just as the Kaliyuga always begins at the moment of Kṛṣṇa's departure from earth.²² In a sense, Kampan simply takes this attitude toward time to its logical limit by containing the cycle within the boundaries of the verse. Thus the very units of his narration, the single *viruttam* verses, often seem to become immobile units isolated to a degree from the development of the story even as they contribute, when taken together, to this same development. At their best, Kampan's verses stand alone as self-contained epitomes of their context, and their time is the present.

The ritual concomitant of this feature of Kampan's art is the attempt to recreate the mythical event in worship, so that the present moment itself bears the burden of the myth. Moreover, this general attribute of myth coincides with a specific characteristic of the South Indian *bhakti* tradition of which Kampan is a part—the clear preference for the here and now, a this-worldly orientation which asserts the presence of the god within the conditions of our present life. We have seen above how the poet praises the world of men as superior to heaven; in the context of Viṣṇu's promise to the gods to be born on earth as Rāma, we find a similar attitude in the description of the gods' rejoicing:

As soon as he had spoken, they rose (from their position
of worship)

and, jumping for joy,
sang that auspicious Name which holds all good:
“Māyan adorned with fragrant Tulasi
has granted us salvation
this day”. (203).

²² *Viṣṇupurāṇa* 5.38.8-10.

Note the stress on *inru*, ‘this day’: the word appears at the start of the fourth line of the Tamil verse, the position of greatest tension. This is the culmination of the epiphany; the devotee is saved immediately, in present time, in this world in which Viṣṇu is born (cf. *mā iru nālam*, ‘the great world’, at the climax of the following verse). The audience who hears this verse identifies itself at once with the gods; salvation has already been gained. I will return to this idea in the final section below. For the moment, let us turn to another example.

3. *The Black Sun*

Kampan often seems to have a special fondness for the sun—perhaps because of the close association of Viṣṇu with solar attributes, an association of which the poet was obviously aware. Rāma himself is often compared by Kampan to the sun. In the following passage, the poet leads up to such a comparison by a striking description of the sunrise as seen in the forest:

The sun whose death the day before
recalled the death of all who suffer endless rebirths,
that sun which is without birth
was born again
and thus made one forget heaven and all other pure worlds.²³

Why did the sunrise make those who beheld it forget heaven? According to the commentators on this verse, the point is that the sun, which is not born and never dies, provides a contrast to the lives of creatures who suffer endless rebirths and recurring death; the use of the verbs *ira*, ‘to die’, and *pīra*, ‘to be born’, to describe the previous day’s sunset and the present sunrise, respectively, is therefore pointed and ironic, intended to drive home the contrast. The clue to this notion lies in the epithet *pīravā*, ‘the unborn’, to describe the sun; the sun thus makes us think of *mokṣa*, of a state beyond birth and death, and

²³ *Irāmāvatāram* 2.2065. Note that in 2.2062 the sunset of the previous day has been compared to the death of Daśaratha. Kampan’s predilection for solar imagery is also undoubtedly connected to the solar attributes of kingship: see, for example, *Purānāyūru* 8 (where the king in fact surpasses the sun, just as Daśaratha’s umbrella makes the moon redundant); *Purānāyūru* 65; Gonda, pp. 166-7.

forget heaven and other worlds which, however superior to life on earth, would still implicate us in the process of creation. “Everyone must seek *mukti*, in which there is no birth”.²⁴ But is this really the point? The verse is a celebration of sunrise as seen on the earth; and this spectacle which the poet praises involves, in his words, a kind of birth for the sun. We forget heaven not because we are reminded of the transience of pleasures and wish to renounce them, but because life on earth is beautiful! And the essence of this joy in mundane existence is explained in the following verse, in which Rāma is seen by Sītā at the moment of sunrise:

The lotuses which rise from the mud
beheld the body of the sun upon his chariot
and brilliantly spread their blossoms;
the lotus-face of the lady lithe as a creeper
flowered as she looked at that other, black sun
who was her lord. (2066).

We have another iconic pun: the dark god is radiant as the sun, just as the shadow of Daśaratha’s umbrella dispels darkness. Here the cliché sustains the reversal implicit in the previous verse: it is the presence of the dark sun Rāma on the earth which gives joy to life on the earth and makes birth a blessing rather than a source of sorrow. The play on darkness and light which gives this verse its power recalls a much older Tamil poem: in *Ainkurunūru* 454 the heroine compares her ‘black beauty’ (*māmai kkavine*) to the whiteness of jasmine with its buds like the moonlight.

4. *Digression: The Androgyn in the Forest*

The technique we are exploring is not unique to Kampan, although Kampan may well be its finest exponent. Let us look at one Śaiva example of the poetic reduction of myth. The *Tevāram*-poet Cuntaramūrtti makes the wives of the sages in the Pine Forest address the mendicant Siva as follows:

²⁴ Commentary to this verse in the edition of the U. Ve. Cāmināt'aiyar Library (Tiruvāṇmiyūr, 1972), *Ayottiyā kāntam*, Vol. II, p. 547.

Your body is covered with ash white as pearl;
 you stand there begging, with her of the dark long eyes
 taking half your body.
 We will give you no alms.
 Go away! ²⁵

The women are angry that Śiva has come as the androgyne, with Umā occupying her half of his body. And well might they be angry—for the whole point of Śiva's appearance in the Pine Forest is his seductive character! The wives of the sages lose their chastity by following the naked beggar, as their husbands follow the ravishing Mohinī-Viṣṇu.²⁶ But in the *Tevāram* verse just quoted, the seduction is ruled out by Śiva's appearance as the androgyne. The poet deliberately empties the myth of its normal force; the narrative has been replaced by an ironic image freezing into icon. The androgyne is, to be sure, one of Śiva's forms, but it is a form utterly unsuited to the Pine Forest myth; its presence here therefore depends on the poet's search for a means of expressing his devotion. The metaphor he chooses is, as often, erotic in force; the devotee identifies himself with the wives of the sages, who long for the god but, in this case, are prevented from attaining union with him. This verse is thus a variation on the theme of the lovers' quarrel (*ūṭal*): the devotee sends his god away. For our purposes it is important to observe how a classic Śaiva myth has been transformed so as to provide a familiar framework for a wholly new situation of devotion.

5. *Self-destruction vs. Identity: the Devotee and his God*

All the above examples show a tendency to build upon an essentially iconic, formalized, rigidly ordered perspective. The poet achieves his effect by extending and working with the conventional descriptions of his subject; the cliché is gratefully accepted, never ironically con-

²⁵ Cuntaramūrtticuvāmikal, *Tevāram* (Tarumapuram, 1964), 36.5 (Tirup-paiññili).

²⁶ See *Kūrmapurāṇa* (Vāraṇasī, 1972), 2.37.1-162; *Saurapurāṇa* (ASS, Poona, 1889), 69.37-54; *Kantapurāṇam* of Kacciappacivācāriyar (Madras, 1907), 6.13.30-127; *Tirunēlvelitālapurāṇam* of Nēllaiyappa Pillai (Tirunēlveli, 1860), 57.77-260, 297-354. And see the discussion by Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Ascetism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva* (London, 1973), pp. 172-203.

fronted with an inferior or changed *present*—as it is in modern Hebrew poetry, for example. With Kampan, we are never far removed from an idealized universe, in which the individual, however complex, can only rarely detach himself from larger categories. To illustrate the contrast with the ideology of the modern Western artist, let us recall Flaubert's advice to the young de Maupassant:

"Having further pointed out to me the truth that nowhere in the world are there two grains of sand, two flies, two hands or two noses that are absolutely alike, he would have me briefly describe a person or an object in such a way as to make him or it sharply distinct, and different from all other persons or objects of the same race or kind.

'When you pass a grocer sitting in front of his door,' he said, 'or a concierge smoking his pipe, or a line of hackney carriages, show me that grocer or that concierge, show me his pose and his whole physical appearance in an image so skillfully constructed that it also contains his whole moral nature, so that I can't confuse him with any other grocer or concierge...' "²⁷

Obsessive originality observes the individual in all his uniqueness; Kampan, to mix traditions, would have been more interested in grocers (or concierges) as a class, or, perhaps, in whatever it is that constitutes the essence of the Grocer. In actual fact, the *Irāmāvatāram* offers us surpassing portraits of the perfect South Indian king, hero, servant, wife, Brahmin—even, perhaps (although here the problem is more complex), of the perfect Enemy, the embodiment of a rather seductive *adharma* (Tam. *maran*). There is, no doubt, a tendency for Western readers to admire Kampan most just when the conventions lapse, and an unexpected individuality shines through. But this approach seems unlikely to bring us nearer to the aesthetic basis of the work. Indeed, the problem of individuality seems to be basic to an understanding of the rhetoric, and one can hardly help asking just what is the nature of the individual who listens to the *Irāmāvatāram* as it is recited on the steps of the temple *mandapa*, or even read out over the radio!

It is a commonplace that according to Hindu theory the individual derives essential attributes of his identity from his affiliation to his caste. Each caste (*jāti* rather than *varṇa*) offers its individual members a nature (*svabhāva*) which is theirs, ineluctably, from birth. This identity can at times conflict with the individual conscience, or with

²⁷ Guy de Maupassant, preface to *Pierre et Jean* (trans. Lowell Bair, *Pierre and Jean and Selected Short Stories*, New York, 1969, p. 13).

absolute ideals: thus we have the strangely ambivalent figures of the pious demons, for example, who would give up their traditional duties (*swadharma*) of killing and devouring creatures in favor of obedience to the principle of *ahimsā*, or of devotion to Śiva or Viṣṇu.²⁸ It is, in fact, the emergence of *bhakti* movements which makes this kind of conflict most palpable. One might therefore be tempted to see in *bhakti*, with its universalist message and seeming indifference to social categories, a force working toward greater individualism, as well as social iconoclasm. *Bhakti* could thus be seen as developing the individualism which Louis Dumont, in a seminal essay, has attributed to the Renouncer;²⁹ indeed, Dumont regards *bhakti* as a “sanyasic development, an invention of the renoucer”.³⁰

Now it is quite true that *bhakti* religion has inherited a great deal of the vocabulary and concepts of the *mokṣa*-oriented speculative tradition. The god of devotion is continually praised as the provider of release (see the example quoted above, vs. 191-2). Nevertheless, I would suggest that this feature, as in the case of the sannyāsin himself, has very little to do with true individualism—even with the individualism of a man-out-of-the-world, in Dumont’s terms.³¹ Perhaps if we could transcend our prejudices in this respect for a moment, we might see just how tenuous is the existence of the individual in India—and not only in physical terms!³² Let us look first at the sannyāsin. It is true that the sannyāsin appears as an individual striving to achieve his own salvation; but what form does this salvation take? However

²⁸ See O’Flaherty, *Origins of Evil*, pp. 94-138.

²⁹ Louis Dumont, “World Renunciation in Indian Religions”, in *Religion/Politics and History in India* (Paris, 1970), pp. 33-60.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 46: “...these ideas have two facets, one for the man-in-the-world, who is not an individual, and the other for the renoucer, who is an individual-outside-the-world”.

³² Today, of course, one finds an imported individualism at work. The sense of change in this respect is nicely conveyed by R. K. Narayan in “Annamalai” (*A Horse and Two Goats*, Mysore, 1970), where the old gardener urges his master to take his name off the gate: “All sorts of people read your name aloud while passing down the road. It is not good. Often urchins and tots just learning to spell shout your name and run off when I try to catch them. The other day some women also read your name and laughed to themselves. Why should they? I do not like it at all.” What a different world was his where a name was to be concealed rather than blazoned forth in print, ether waves, and celluloid! (pp. 76-77).

positively the experience may be defined, *mokṣa* seems to imply the dissolution of the personality. This, indeed, is its very essence, if one may judge from the classic descriptions of the *Upaniṣads*. The state of bondage is precisely that state of self-love in which the individual says of himself, "I am he", or "This is mine".³³ Even Dumont admits that the goal of the sannyāsin is hardly that of developing the sense of individual uniqueness: "In leaving the world he finds himself invested with an individuality which he apparently finds uncomfortable, since all his efforts tend to its extinction or transcendence".³⁴

Somewhat more substantial is the argument that the theory of *karma*, which is clearly linked to *sannyāsa* and the sannyāsin's goal of release, takes place on the level of the individual destiny. Yet to argue for the existence of a conception of the individual on the basis of the theory of *karma*—as Dumont seems to do—is to pit oneself against the whole force of the concept of release. The Buddha may indeed remember thousands of former births, but these memories give him no greater individual substance than any other 'personality'; they are external factors necessary, no doubt, to the attainment of knowledge but in no way to be equated with the state of freedom. If enlightenment of this sort is a form of individualism, then we are left with a very odd individual indeed—with a personality either extinguished already, or still languishing only insofar as it has failed to attain this sought-for annihilation.

This belief in the ultimate non-existence of the individual is, in fact, one of the legacies of the Upaniṣadic tradition to *bhakti*. On the level of ideology, at least, the *bhakta* must lose himself as he recognizes his inner identity with his god, who replaces the transcendent absolute of *mokṣa*. In Tamil Śaivism, and throughout the Tamil puranic myths, the greatest mistake a *bhakta* can make is *ahaṅkāra*, 'egoism', while the essential pattern of the entire corpus of *bhakti* mythology in Tamil is one of self-sacrifice to the deity. This idea, we may note in passing, occurs with respect to the anomalous figure of the demon-devotee mentioned above. In the *Iraniyavataippatalam*, a long insertion made by Kampan in the *Rāmāyaṇa* narrative, the devoted demon Prahlāda is saved by Viṣṇu from death at the hands of his father; Viṣṇu then

³³ See *Maitryupaniṣad* 3.2; Śaṅkara on *BAU* 1.3.2-5.

³⁴ Dumont, p. 45.

crowns Prahlāda king of the demons while making the following interesting remark:

Dharma, truth, the four Vedas, divine grace,
boundless knowledge, all undying substances,
the ancient eight *gunas*—
all will work at your behest,
o you whose form is light:
flourish
as Myself.³⁵

The poet equates the devotee with his god: Prahlāda has been translated into a form of Viṣṇu. This is one way of dealing with the anomaly; the threatening figure of the pious demon can be transformed into a more acceptable form. In the *Padmapurāṇa*'s version of this myth, Prahlāda is ultimately turned into Indra;³⁶ but Kampāṇ makes him remain king of the demons after proving his identity with Viṣṇu. In other words, whatever inner transformation may have taken place, the *bhakti-hero* ends up in the role to which he was born, with his socially contingent identity intact. Such a result is, I would suggest, one of the achievements of the *bhakti* movements as a whole, with the exception of truly extreme groups like the early Viraśaivas. It is thus utterly erroneous to regard *bhakti* as revolutionary in a social sense. Rather, *bhakti* tends toward the affirmation of the social order through the sanctification of the present. Already in the *Bhagavadgitā*, *bhakti* provides in effect a practical answer to the fascination of renunciation; the effect of Kṛṣṇa's teaching is to send Arjuna back to battle to fulfil his *svadharma* as a member of society. From this point on, Arjuna is, no doubt, struggling to detach himself from the desire for the fruits of action, as Kṛṣṇa has advised him; nevertheless, he has clearly recovered his identity as *kṣatriya* hero and husband of Draupadī, and his actions are in harmony with the social ethic rather than opposed to it. It is Kṛṣṇa's teaching of devotion which permits this return to the social fabric.

The *bhakti* tradition is complex. On the one hand it has absorbed

³⁵ *Irāmāvatāram* 6.303.

³⁶ *Padmapurāṇa* (ASS, Poona, 1894), 2.1.5; cf. O'Flaherty, *Origins of Evil*, pp. 131-8.

the idealism of release, as we have seen; on the other hand, it holds within it the old ritual goals of rebirth, of life won from death, indeed of the ritual conquest of death. These two currents—Brāhmaṇa ritualism and Upaniṣadic idealism—mingle in *bhakti* religion without resolving the contradiction between them. Yet it is difficult not to regard the ritual element as dominant in South Indian devotionalism. The practical aims of *bhakti*, as expressed, for example, in the act of pilgrimage to sacred shrines, are usually very evident; no-one in South India goes on pilgrimage to achieve *mukti*! Popular Hinduism in the South is unashamedly *arthasāstra*, the realization of practical goals, although its literature is deeply concerned with the spiritual content of actions. Corresponding to this orientation is the interest in the present. *Bhakti* cuts across the traditional, degenerative view of time; the Kaliyuga becomes the best of all ages. Excellent is the Kaliyuga, for by merely pronouncing the name of Keśava in the Kaliyuga, a man obtains the reward of meditation, sacrifice, and worship in previous ages.³⁷ In the experience of *mokṣa*, time is abolished altogether; *bhakti* tends instead to reverse it. We have seen to what effect the devotee praises his present life.

But—and here we must return to the problem of the individual personality—*bhakti* hardly takes the individual outside that world of collective identities (or, if one prefers, of shadowy relations) which is seen as normative in Hindu India. On the contrary—it sustains his place in that world, which it consecrates as the realm of the divine.³⁸ Identity still depends primarily upon the group for its definition; the divine pours into an already existing vessel. And, however fragile this vessel might seem to us, its preservation is clearly a major religious aim. Iravati Karve has stressed the importance attached to *smyti*, ‘memory’, “the one thread that creates the oneness in a man’s ever-changing life”.³⁹ *Smyti* gives a man his sense of identity in a world of bewildering flux; but, as Karve remarks, this sense of identity is closely bound up with the question of personal duties. The *Gitā*, indeed the *Mahābhārata* as a whole, is concerned with this very question. Arjuna is confused until Kṛṣṇa instructs him in his duties; others,

³⁷ *Viṣṇupurāṇa* 6.2.15-17.

³⁸ On the sanctity of the mundane, see H. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India* (New York, 1969), p. 573.

³⁹ Iravati Karve, *Yuganta, the End of an Epoch* (New Delhi, 1969), p. 120.

such as Aśvatthāman, never succeed in regaining their lost *smṛti*. The individual is commanded to retain his consciousness, *smṛti*, to the moment of his death: Bhīṣma is the classic example of this achievement in the epic.⁴⁰ But the consciousness which the individual must preserve for himself is crystallized through the group; it is not the individual but the collective identity which must be kept intact in each embodiment.

But does not bhakti bring a concrete individuality into the sensation of the devotee, in the form of the god he worships? Yes and no. Certainly the poetry of *bhakti* is concerned, above all, with the relationship of the *bhakta* and his one god. But this hardly answers our question, which has to do with the self-view of the devotee rather than the image of the god. One could, perhaps, take the devotional perspective as a great yet quixotic attempt by the shadow to assert its uniqueness; but the personal god is hardly limited by the personality which worships him. In the end, we seem still to be left with an individual who can hardly conceive of himself other than as defined by birth, or else never born at all.

We have come a long way from rhetorical theory *per se*. But the power of poetry depends to no small extent upon the context in which it is born. A society in which the individual has relatively little discrete importance may develop an idealized, conventionalized art. It is precisely the tension between the ideal and the real which the Western reader misses in Kampaṇ. Rāma-*bhakti* generally reveals a thorough-going idealism, as anyone who has seen it in action could attest. Rāma is the ideal son, the ideal husband, the ideal brother, king, etc.; already in Vālmīki he appears worthy to an extreme, rather monotonous extent.⁴¹ This tendency became stronger and more consistent in later *Rāmāyana*s. No wonder Kampaṇ has been accused by

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* In the Southern epic tradition, Arāvān too stays alive to witness the entire Bhārata war—even after he has been sacrificed to ensure the Pāṇḍavas' triumph! (Village tradition of Nēppattūr, Tanjore District, recorded 19.1.1976). On Arāvān see *Villiputtūrar Pāratam* 2659-2667 (*kalappali* 1-8); Cu. A. Irāmacāmippulavar, *Metkolvilakka kkatai akaravaricai* (Madras, 1963), I, pp. 40-41; F. Gros and R. Nagaswamy, *Uttaramērūr: légendes, histoire, monuments* (Pondichéry, 1970), p. 122.

⁴¹ There are, however, episodes in which Rāma appears in a somewhat negative light, e.g., in his slaying of Vālin and in his harsh treatment of Sītā after she has been recaptured from Rāvaṇa.

modern writers of preferring the more complex figure of Rāvaṇa, just as Milton is so often said to have loved his Satan.⁴² The contrast with Śiva is illuminating in this context—for Śiva is surely the reverse of ideal, an outcaste, heretic, a mad dancer in the cremation ground, a seducer of women, a gambler who cheats his opponents, a *brahmahan*, etc. God is an outsider, totally different from us, opposed to our conceptions of order. Yet Śiva in his anti-social character seems to affirm the social order through antithesis! The Tamil mythological tradition was not content with this pattern, and thus we find in the Tamil purāṇas a Śiva who is pure and without evil, no *brahmahan* or adulterer but rather a playful, ultimately moralistic paragon and teacher.

But the aesthetic world of the Tamil purāṇas is not so elaborate as Kampan's. Kampan is a master of the ideal taken to its conclusion, of the icon which arrests the flow of time. There is nothing individual here, only categories within which the single devotee finds his models. Hence the power of the cliché, which is no less frozen, and no less evocative, than the icon it describes. The ideal is situated outside of historical time; a personality whose memories are myths can only exist within limits imposed from without, or cease to exist by fusion with a single, undifferentiated force. The cliché can be extended but never transcended; it can push the ideal ever farther from the real, but never look back to consider the gap. For a world of relations seeks certitude and stasis rather than irony and the reliving of the past; and it is the poet who brings iconic permanence to the present who is immortalized by his tradition.

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⁴² See Zwi Werblowsky, *Lucifer and Prometheus: A Study of Milton's Satan* (London, 1952), *passim*.

STRUCTURE AND HISTORY IN THE STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM AND POLITICAL ORDER

I. *Introduction*

A new book by S. J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand against a Historical Background*,¹ deserves close attention by scholars concerned with the relationship between Theravāda Buddhism and political order. Tambiah has attempted a sweeping synthesis of existing knowledge regarding the structure of the relationship between the Sangha and traditional polity in the Thai states which were the antecedents of modern Thailand; he has sought to relate this synthesis to the structure of Sangha/polity relations which appear in early Buddhist writings, in the reign of King Aśoka in India and subsequently in the history of Sri Lanka; and he has endeavored to show in what ways the traditional relationship has been transformed or has persisted in contemporary Thailand. In this latter connection, he has presented new findings, based on research which he carried out on the role of the Sangha in urban Thailand. *En passant*, he has advanced a number of stimulating ideas and reflections which will certainly provoke further research.

Tambiah began this study with research on the contemporary Sangha in urban Thailand:

[I]n 1971 I began wide-ranging field work in Bangkok, studying closely four urban monasteries and visiting others (including some in provincial towns), inquiring into the organization of the monks' universities, particularly Mahachulalongkorn, and the careers of their administrator monks and monk-students; interviewing officials at the Department of Religious Affairs and collecting whatever official documents I could...²

In this book, Tambiah attempts to place his field research "against a historical backdrop" in which he depicts the antecedents to the contemporary relationship between Sangha and polity in Thailand. He was led to confront the general question of the "religion's connection with so-

¹ Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology, No. 15), 1976; hereafter this book will be cited as WCWR.

² WCWR, p. 3; see also pp. 279-281 and 330-332 for discussion of the characteristics of the urban monasteries which Tambiah studied.

ciety as a whole, especially in society's aspect as a polity”³ with reference not only to contemporary Thailand, but also to the Thai states that were forebears of the modern nation and to paradigms established in Sri Lanka and ancient India.

In undertaking his excursus into macrosociological analysis, Tambiah employs a perspective whereby he considers the phenomena studied collectively as a “total social fact”. This perspective can be seen as the most recent and perhaps the most sophisticated statement of a type of structuralism which has been developed by a number of British anthropologists, the most notable of whom being Sir Edmund Leach. Yet, for all its sophistication, I believe this approach to be fundamentally inadequate for interpreting the historical patterns of relationship between Buddhism and polity which constitute the subject matter of Tambiah's inquiry.

2. History, Totalization and Dialectic in Tambiah's Approach

Tambiah's earlier study of the relationship between Buddhism and society focussed on what he termed “ritual complexes” which were manifest in the religious practices of villagers in northeastern Thailand. In *Buddhism and Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand*⁴ he attempted to present the religion of a northeastern Thai village “as a synchronic, ordered scheme of collective representations”. While he claimed that he also related this village religious system to “the institutional context and social structure of the contemporary villagers” and “to the grand Buddhist literary and historical tradition”,⁵ he strongly emphasized the synchronic structure as he worked it out from his observations of, and inquiries about, rituals performed in the village. At the end of that book, however, he did raise the question of how village Buddhism relates to “the religious tradition presented in the literary texts”.⁶ While he did not develop any systematic answer to this question, he set forth a position on how this question might be answered:

In the study of religion in societies like Thailand I would make a distinction between *historical* religion and *contemporary* religion without treating them as exclusive levels. Historical Buddhism would comprise not only the range of religious texts written in the past, but also the changes in the institutional

³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴ Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970; hereafter this work will be cited as BSC.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

form of Buddhism over the ages. Contemporary religion would simply mean the religion as it is practiced today and should *include* those texts written in the past that are used today and those customs sanctified in the past that persist today and are integral parts of the ongoing religion. Thus, if the question of the relation between historical and contemporary religion interests us, we should look for two kinds of links, namely *continuities* and *transformations*.⁷

In this new book, the search for continuities and transformations in the relationship between historical and contemporary Theravāda Buddhism informs the whole work. This search is undertaken in terms of a theoretical perspective which, while allowing for radical transformations, stresses the continuities of long-established structures. Central to this approach is the concept of the “dialectic”:

[O]ur thesis has been that canonical and postcanonical doctrines, the commentaries and the verbalizations of the believers, the structures embedded in their myths and rites, the patterns of their actions—which together reveal the coupling of Buddhism and the polity—are ridden with dialectical tensions, paradoxes, and ambiguities, which occur as parameters. By dialectical tensions... I mean that a conception subsumes two tendencies that pull in two directions, and the degree of tension is marked by the force of the stretching: by parameter I mean that a constant component of the mix can vary in different cases and the variations—which are impelled by circumstances and are responses to situations—constitute the set or family of occurrences. Thus the ideological armature can show pulsation between modalities.⁸

This formulation of the dialect is, as Tambiah says, neither Hegelian nor Marxian. Tambiah's dialectical tensions do not lead to any fundamental changes; rather, they lead to “pulsation between modalities” and to temporary “crystallization” of patterns which “constitute a limited set of possibilities”.⁹ These dialectical tensions also lie entirely at the level of “conceptions” and do not involve any tension between conception (ideology) and the concrete (or material) conditions in which people live. Tambiah rejects the “developmental thesis” which would posit that changes in ideology occur through its “accommodation” to the world.¹⁰ When radical change finally does come to Thailand (and other Theravādin polities), it comes through the introduction of very different ideas from alien cultural traditions. Linear change, entailing “an unfolding destiny expressed in ideas such as progress, evo-

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 374; italics in original.

⁸ WCWR, pp. 515-516.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 517.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 515.

lution, development has its origins in Judaeo-Christian traditions of prophecy and infected the East through colonial contact with the West".¹¹ Moreover, while maintaining that the impact of the West did produce a radical transformation, he is still inclined to emphasize the continuities after contact more than the changes. In the case of Thailand, he says that "rather than consider the Western impact as having produced only discontinuities and dramatic changes in the Thai polity, it is revealing to view it as also having reinforced and accentuated in certain significant aspects both its overt and latent structural features".¹²

The fundamental structure of which historical cases are crystallizations constitute what Tambiah calls a "totalization" or "total social fact".

Totalization for me... means how the systematically accountable, in terms of continuities and transformations in an open-ended way, produces a historical totality that is best understood not in disaggregation but in combination.¹³

There is, according to Tambiah, a fundamental relationship between the Buddhist Sangha and polity in Buddhist societies which has the characteristics of a "total social fact".

According to the Buddhist scheme of things relating to the world, there are two foremost or superior beings, the *bhikkhu* and the king, but the former is superior... The king is the mediator between social disorder and the social order; the *bhikkhu* is the mediator between home and homelessness, between a world of fetters and a free state of deliverance. The king is the fountain-head of society; the *bhikkhu* is of that society and transcends it... In a nutshell this is what Buddhism as a "total social fact" ... is largely about—a totality that includes the relation between *bhikkhu* and king (who encompasses and includes the householders), between the Buddha and the Cakkavatti... as the two wheels of the dhamma, between the sangha and the polity and society in which it is located, between this-wordly and other-wordly pursuits. It is this totality that also makes Buddhism a world religion and not merely the pursuit of a few virtuous.¹⁴

3. Galactic Polity, Radial Polity, and Changing Sangha/Polity Relations

The foremost result of Tambiah's approach is the construction of a model of what he calls the "galactic polity".

Such a political edifice... [is] a galaxy-type structure with lesser political

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 529.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 493.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 5; also see p. 516.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-16.

replicas revolving around the central entity and in perpetual motion of fission and incorporation. Indeed, it is clear that this what the much-cited but little understood *cakkavatti* represented: that a king as a wheelrolling world ruler by definition required lesser kings under him who in turn encompassed still lesser rulers, that the raja of rajas was more a presiding apical ordinator than a totalitarian authority between whom and the people nothing intervened except his own agencies and agents of control.¹⁵

This model was first evolved, according to Tambiah, in early Buddhist theory of kingship and was adopted by the Theravāda Buddhist rulers of South and Southeast Asia as the basis for their political control. The application of the model was, according to Tambiah, not a simple translation of the model into actuality in successive cases.

[I]t would be wrong to represent the polity as a cosmological plan of static properties; rather, within certain logical and geopolitical limits or parameters, different kings made different uses of their potentialities. Closely related to this is the fact of pulsations and dramatic changes in these polities.¹⁶

It could be said that the fundamental tensions, if not contradictions of the galactic polity were reflected at two levels: in the push and pull between the center and its provinces and in the dynamics of leader and retinue or follower relations... which continually distorted and threw out of alignment the formal hierarchies and symmetries of ranks and administrative departments.¹⁷

The polities can be said to have a *weaker* form, which is perhaps the more usual state, and a *stronger* form which is perhaps achieved during exceptional periods.¹⁸

Tambiah argues that all of the traditional polities of the Thai as well the other traditional polities of Theravāda Buddhist Southeast Asia (and perhaps of non-Buddhist Southeast Asia as well) can be understood with reference to his model of "pulsating galactic polities".

Tambiah goes on to argue that there was a fundamental relationship between this type of polity and the Buddhist Sangha; however, this relationship itself was beset by a basic tension related to the oscillation between weaker and stronger forms of the polity:

The ideal of a complementary between the sangha and the polity is always assailed by a real contradiction. On the one hand, whenever the polity is weak and chaos threatens the society, the sangha too in its aspect as a collection of monastic communities tends to disintegrate—not only for lack of adequate patronage and security but also because, it would appear, a certain amount of political overseeing and regulation guarantees that the monks live

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

according to the *vinaya* code. One [sic] the other hand, a political system that becomes overly strong and ambitious is in danger of excessive penetration and excessive regulation of the sangha ... and a search for legitimacy by involving monks in more and more political rituals of state. If this trend gets out of hand, there is the danger of an impoverishment of the monk's vocation and spiritual concerns.¹⁹

Tambiah gives particular attention to the relationship between the Sangha and polity in the pre-modern Thai states of Sukhothai, Ayutthaya, and early Bangkok. His discussion could have been improved if he had drawn on some of the more recent studies of these states and not depended so heavily on rather outdated works such as those by W. A. R. Wood²⁰ and H. G. Quaritch Wales.²¹ His discussion of the emergence of Tai states²² which involves such questions as the place of Tai-speaking peoples in South China, could have benefitted from reference to the work of Mote, among others.²³ Our knowledge of Sukhothai has been greatly advanced by the detailed studies based on Sukhodayan epigraphy by A. B. Griswold and Prasert Na Nagara.²⁴ Early Ayutthayan history has been subjected to critical analysis in a recently published dissertation by Charnvit Kasetsiri.²⁵ Tambiah has also not drawn on any primary sources in Thai and has overlooked one very relevant source for his study, Prince Damrong's "History of the Sangha".²⁶

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 512-513.

²⁰ *A History of Siam* (Bangkok, 1924).

²¹ *Ancient Siamese Government and Administration* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1934).

²² WCWR, p. 79.

²³ F. W. Mote, "Problems of Thai Prehistory", *Sangkhomsat Porithat* (The Social Science Review) (Bangkok), 2.2:100-109, 1964. Also see Charnvit Kasetsiri, *The Rise of Ayudhya* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 30-33.

²⁴ References to most of these studies are given by Griswold and Prasert in their overview paper, "On Kingship and Society at Sukhodaya", in *Change and Persistence in Thai Society: Essays in Honor of Lauriston Sharp*, ed. by G. William Skinner and A. Thomas Kirsch (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975), pp. 29-92. Although this article came out after Tambiah had finished his book, the primary studies appeared in the *Journal of the Siam Society* between 1968 and 1973.

²⁵ Charnvit, *op. cit.*

²⁶ Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, "*Tamnān khana song*". This work, originally published in 1914 and republished several times since (for example, it was re-published recently in *Tamnān thāng phraphutthasātsanā* ['Buddhist Histories'] by Prince Damrong Rajanubhab [Bangkok: Volume published for the cremation of

Tambiah strongly rejects the arguments, advanced primarily by Quaritch Wales, that the traditional Thai polities, and particularly the Siamese state of Ayutthaya, was organized according to rational premises. Tambiah argues that these states were structured cosmologically—that is, according to structural categories predicated upon a fundamental dual classification of the world and elaborated in the form of the galactic polity.²⁷

According to Tambiah, the Western influences which began to make themselves felt in Thailand from about the middle of the 19th-century on led to a fundamental transformation of the Thai polity and of the relationships between the Sangha and polity. Politically, this transformation resulted in what Tambiah has called the “radial polity”.

Our evaluation is that the linear cumulative changes that reach their climax particularly during the period... [of 1893-1915]... converted the traditional galactic polity not into a full centralized bureaucratic polity, but rather into what I call a *radial polity*... [W]hereas the structural emphasis in the galactic polity was on satellites revolving around a center whose shape and structure they replicate on a lesser scale, in the radial polity the emphasis is on a swollen metropolis trying to control the provinces through its agents and conversely, on all provincial roads leading to the capital.²⁸

Although Thailand's absolute monarchy was replaced by a constitutional monarchy in 1932 and although Thailand has been ruled since 1932 mainly by a succession of military dictators, the basic structure of the radial polity, according to Tambiah, has remained unchanged.

The Sangha in this radial polity has become increasingly centralized and hierarchically structured and it has been subject, since at least the beginning of the 20th century, to strong controls imposed by the secular government. Tambiah shows, in the cases of such popular monks as Khru Ba Si Wichai during the 1930s and Phra Phimonlatham during the 1950s that the Thai government has been successful in curbing any independent movements focussed on the Sangha.

From these theoretical premises, Tambiah proceeds to a discussion of the Sangha as it is found in the national capital of Bangkok. This discussion is, in my opinion, the best part of the book, mainly because

Phra Thēppakhunāthān (Phon Junputto), 1971] has been superceded in many respects. Nonetheless, it remains an important source for understanding the history of the Sangha in Thailand, and particularly during the Ayutthayan period.

²⁷ See, especially, WCWR, pp. 140-141.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

it here that the author breaks new ground with an analysis based on his own first hand research. Tambiah finds that the overwhelming number of monks in the monasteries in the capital which he studied and of the monks connected with the Buddhist universities are of rural backgrounds. Although no statistical evidence has been obtained, Tambiah is probably correct in generalizing this finding to the totality of the Sangha in Bangkok. He argues that while modern secular education has led to a general decrease in the percentage of the population who are members of the Sangha,²⁹ the Sangha continues to offer a realistic path of educational attainment for those who come from poor rural backgrounds since religious education, if pursued far enough, can lead to advancement in either the religious or secular sectors of Thai society. It should be noted here that in Thailand there is no stigma on a man leaving the Sangha; on the contrary, the ex-bhikkhu is held in high esteem by lay society. He traces the pattern whereby rural poor boys start off in their local village monasteries and, if bright and encouraged by local monks, then move on to a provincial monastery where they receive their basic religious education. Then, if they are so inclined (which most seem to be) they will go off to further their education. In Bangkok, where they usually reach the age when they can leave the novitiate and be ordained as monks, they will often gain not only a religious education but may also gain a secular education through one of the two Buddhist universities. Most usually, after this education, these long-term Sangha members will leave the Sangha and take up secular roles. Those who do not leave, however, often begin to climb up the hierarchy of offices within the Sangha itself.

Critical to this mobility of boys from rural backgrounds to urban monasteries is the patronage which is accorded them by more senior monks. Tambiah has provided an excellent analysis of this form of patronage,³⁰ thereby adding to the existing analyses of patronage in lay society which have been made by Lucien Hanks and Akin Rabindrantha.

Looking at the more general relationships between Buddhism and polity in contemporary (post-1932) Thailand, Tambiah argues that strong symbolic links have been forged between national identity and Buddhism. These links, coupled with the legitimating role played by a

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 265-269.

³⁰ See, especially, *ibid.*, pp. 320-321.

Buddhist monarch, have, in his eyes, produced a political system which would appear firmly established:

... I would characterize the present political system (1971-1972) as follows: Capped by a revered (though politically clipped) monarch, legitimated by a ritualistically robust Buddhism, and controlled by army and police generals whose ground of support is the civil and military bureaucracies, it commands by and large the acquiescence of the large mass of citizens who recognize themselves as Thai.³¹

This conclusion has been called into question by the events beginning with the student-led revolution of 1973 and continuing through the subsequent political changes of a three-year experiment with democracy, a second bloody revolution in 1976 which brought a military-backed civilian government to power and a more recent coup in October 1977 which resulted in the establishment of a military government committed to the restoration of democracy. During the period since 1973 there has been a politicization of the monkhood which appears unprecedented in Thai history.³² Tambiah, whose book was completed after the 1973 revolution and published in 1976, does make a few brief remarks which indicates his awareness that the conclusions he reached may no longer be entirely valid.³³ However, he does not attempt any analysis of the transformations or continuities in the structure of the Thai polity and in polity/Sangha relations since 1973.

Taking Tambiah's book as a whole, we are presented with an interpretation of political structure and Sangha/polity relations which assumes that from earliest Buddhism to the present day there has been only one "linear" historical transformation. This radical change, which began to take place in the 19th century, was brought about by a *deus ex machina*, namely ideas introduced from the West. While Tambiah acknowledges that this transformation was probably irreversible in Sri Lanka and Burma (since these countries no longer have monarchies), he is not so certain about Thailand where, if one follows the implications of his argument, we may only be seeing one crystallization of the old structure. For Tambiah, structural continuities are far more important than historical transformations.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 499.

³² See my article, "Politics and Militant Buddhism in Contemporary Thailand", in *Religion and Legitimation of Power in Thailand, Laos, and Burma*, ed. by Bardwell Smith (Chambersburg, Pa.: Anima Books, 1978).

³³ See, especially, WCWR., pp. 440, 513-514.

4. History and the Dialectic of Meaning and Experience

While I believe Tambiah's "totalistic" approach to have had positive results, I also maintain that it is limited in a fundamental way. I agree with Tambiah that if Theravāda Buddhism is to be a "world religion" then it must embody a "worldview" (to use a term I prefer) which structures in a fundamental way the nature of existence as it is conceived of by large numbers of people, the vast majority of whom are not committed to leading permanently the life of religious virtuosi. I disagree, however, with Tambiah's assertion that the Theravāda Buddhist worldview can be equated with a cosmology predicated upon the "two wheels of the Dhamma", the bhikkhu and the *cakkavatti* or universal monarch. I also disagree with his claim that the Theravāda Buddhist worldview (his "total social fact") can be assumed to have structured the orientation towards life of all peoples of Sri Lanka, the various Thai states, Burma, Cambodia, and Laos from the earliest introduction of Buddhism in these societies to the present. My dissent from Tambiah's argument flows from a theoretical perspective in which history has a very different significance than it does for Tambiah.

I cannot in this essay attempt a general discussion of the constitutive elements of the Theravāda Buddhist worldview. For the purposes of the present discussion, it is necessary to concern ourselves only with the importance of the Sangha and the *cakkavatti* in this worldview. While there is no question but that Theravāda Buddhism depends upon, and requires the existence of, the Sangha, the predication of Buddhism's status as a world religion on the existence of a monarchy informed by the Dhamma creates a "parameter" (to use Tambiah's terms) which is not essential. Tambiah's assertion in this book notwithstanding, lay Buddhist ethics are not dependent on the existence of a monarchy. Indeed, Tambiah is not true to his own previous work for in *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand* he argued that the monastic communities found in villages were "relatively autonomous" and were integrated into "the villages or towns which maintain them".³⁴ From that work alone, one would have to deduce that there exists a lay ethic of village householders which is "relatively autonomous" from and not "encompassed" by the ethic of Buddhist kings.

While it is unquestionably true that for Buddhism to exist in society

³⁴ BSC, p. 76.

it must shape and structure the quest for and manipulation of power, it does not follow that it is essential for the existence of Buddhism as a world religion that the power holders be Buddhist. One need only to point to the historical persistence of Theravāda Buddhist communities (including both Sangha and laity) in the non-Buddhist polities of Bengal, the northern Malay states, southern China, and Vietnam or to take account of the more recently formed communities in Malaysia, Indonesia, Korea, and a number of Western countries to establish the premise that a Buddhist monarch is not essential to the Buddhist worldview. Moreover, secularization of politics has certainly been taking place in societies which have traditionally been ruled by Buddhist monarchs. In Sri Lanka, the triumph of Buddhist-based politics which appeared assured in the 1950s and 1960s now no longer seems so obvious. In Burma, following the neo-traditionalism of U Nu, the Ne Win government turned Burma on a secular socialist path and has maintained that course for a period longer than that during which U Nu held sway. Laos, and particularly Cambodia, perhaps the most traditional of the Theravāda Buddhist societies, have been embarked on radically secularist and, in the case of Cambodia at least, violently anti-Buddhist, political trajectories since 1975. Even in Thailand which remains the last stronghold of Buddhist-political conservatism, secularist trends can be identified. The King himself in recent years has instituted patronage for Muslim, Christian, and non-Buddhist tribal peoples in Thailand and has had such patronage widely publicized in the country. Secular socialist parties have won seats in nearly all of the elections in Thailand since World War II. I would agree, nonetheless, with Tambiah when he says that "Thai nationalism can wrap around itself a cloak of Buddhistic aura without fear of finding religious obstacles to the social objectives it may wish to promote."³⁵ However, I would argue that the reason this is so has to do with the particular historical interrelationship between Buddhism and polity in Thai society and not with any generic root paradigm established several hundred or thousand years ago. In short, I argue that the Buddhist monarch as a type is a consequence of historical development and not of structural imperative.

I also argue that the Theravāda Buddhist worldview can never be assumed for any particular people at any particular point in time, but

³⁵ WCWR, p. 431.

must always be shown in each case to orient the lives of that people. I would begin by observing that what is considered to be the orthodox worldview in Theravāda Buddhism did not emerge fully formulated at the time of the Buddha. The Pāli canon, which is the source for the worldview, was composed over a period of several centuries after the death of the Buddha and it was not until the 4th century A.D. that the orthodox position was given its fullest and perduring theological exposition in the commentarial writings of Buddhaghosa.³⁶ Even after this formulation, orthodoxy did not immediately establish itself in all the areas where we find evidence of Buddhist influence. We know that Buddhism almost disappeared from Sri Lanka a number of times in the history of that nation, and in Southeast Asia Theravāda Buddhism probably did not get established as the worldview of the populace until the 13th-15th centuries.

An example of where Tambiah wrongly assumes that an orthodox Theravāda Buddhist worldview underlies a cultural tradition in Southeast Asia can be found in his discussion of the Burmese kingdom of Pagan in the 11th-13th centuries. Tambiah assumes that Pagan was prototypically Theravāda Buddhist and cites Luce's study of early Pagan to that effect.³⁷ In fact, Luce's detailed study clearly demonstrates that the great kings of early Pagan, Anorahta (Aniruddha) (1044-1077) and Kyanzittha (1084-1113) drew on a syncretism of religious beliefs—Hindu, Mahāyāna Buddhist, animist, as well as Theravāda Buddhist—to legitimate their reigns.³⁸ While it is true that the Pagan rulers followed some practices which were perpetuated in the practices of later Theravāda Buddhist kings in Burma and Thailand, I think that the historical evidence strongly supports an interpretation which would make the relationship between the Pagan kings and religion fundamentally different from the relationship between later Burmese and Thai kings and Theravāda Buddhism.³⁹ While I cannot make the case here, I also maintain that there are fundamentally important dif-

³⁶ For further elaboration of this argument, see Richard F. Gombrich, *Precept and Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 40-43.

³⁷ WCWR, p. 81.

³⁸ Gordon H. Luce, *Old Burma-Early Pagan*, 3 vols. (Locust Valley, N.Y.: J. J. Augustin, *Artibus Asiae* Supplementum 25, 1969-1970), see I, p. 73, for example.

³⁹ I have discussed this point briefly in *The Golden Peninsula: Culture Adaptation in Mainland Southeast Asia* (New York: Macmillan, 1977), pp. 70-74.

ferences in the structure of the polities of Sukhothai, Ayutthaya, early Bangkok and the Lao state of Campasak which Tambiah conflates together.⁴⁰

As is evident in the above remarks, my view of history is quite different from that of Tambiah. For me, dialectical tensions exist not only between conceptions but also, and more fundamentally, between meaning and experience, that is, between the cultural conceptions which are communicated from one generation to the next and the structure of the actual situations in which people find themselves. If the tension between meaning and experience becomes too great, than either the cultural conceptions or the structure of experience will be fundamentally changed. If a worldview persists, it is not because there are some fixed parametric barriers at the ideological level but because the tension between the worldview and the actual situations in which people find themselves has not become sufficiently acute to stimulate any radical problem of meaning.

Tambiah's ignoring of the conflicts between meaning and experience generated by situational factors is clearly evident in the inadequate treatment he gives to "infrastructure" (a term which he himself introduces⁴¹). In the case of traditional Southeast Asian states he never mentions demographic conditions, and the nature of taxation levied against the peasantry is barely touched upon. While he recognizes the importance of the control of trade, he does not make enough of the important difference in the control of trade exercised by Ayutthaya, and later Bangkok, as compared with most other traditional polities in Southeast Asia. When he introduces his model of the "radial polity," he almost totally ignores the literature on the nature of the colonial political-economy and the rise of the "primate" (or "colonial") city. Rather than taking into account Thailand's response to the intrusion of capitalism, Tambiah makes it seem as though the "radial polity" which emerged in the kingdom was constructed entirely with reference to the ideas about political control held by the ruling elite.

Tambiah is better in his analysis of the infrastructure of the urban Sangha in Thailand. Yet, even in this case, he does not make the important point, implicit in his own data, that there has been a radical shift in the class origins of the urban Sangha from the 19th-century,

⁴⁰ WCWR, pp. 113-124.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

when most of the wats had abbots of royal or noble origin, to the present when most of the abbots of the same wats are of rural background. He also does not discuss the economic basis of urban monasteries, although he does indicate that such an analysis will appear in a sequel volume.⁴² Yet by ignoring this question in the present context, he makes it impossible to understand what interests the Sangha (or particular monasteries) have in the economy, how these interests are politically handled, and how political figures further their interests through the support of important monasteries.

Tambiah does make an effort to characterize the class background of the ruling elite of contemporary Thailand in order to contrast this background with that of the urban Sangha.⁴³ However, any conclusions made on the basis of brief biographical information on nine "top politicians" can hardly be accepted. Tambiah has not, in fact, established any social fact about the social background and the nature of the ruling elite. He might have been on sounder ground if he had drawn on existing relevant studies, notably those of Riggs (which he quotes elsewhere), Skinner, and Evers and Silcock, to name only the more obvious.⁴⁴

His inadequate treatment of class also leads him to miss totally the significant cleavages in Thai society which were developing in the 1960s and which would lead to the political upheavals of the 1970s. He does not recognize the tensions between civil and military bureaucracies, the increasing alienation of the urban middle classes, the developing activism of urban laborers, the proliferation of criticism of the government in the presses and in thousands of books and pamphlets, or the emergence of the student movement as a new element in Thai politics. In short, while Tambiah gives great attention to a cosmologically-based hierarchy in the Thai social order, he gives no systematic attention to the historically-generated conflicts and tensions which provide a dynamic to Thai (and other Theravāda Buddhist) societies.

In sum, I find Tambiah's "totalistic" approach reductionist and in-

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 379n.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 397-398.

⁴⁴ F. W. Riggs, *The Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1967); G. William Skinner, *Leadership and Power in the Chinese Community in Thailand* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1958); H. D. Evers and T. H. Silcock, "Elites and Selection," in *Thailand: Social and Economic Studies in Development*, ed. by T. H. Silcock (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1967), pp. 84-104.

adequate for the purposes of identifying the processes of change. Yet, while recognizing the limitations of the approach, his book still remains a work of considerable merit and cannot be ignored by anyone seriously interested in the relationship between Theravāda Buddhism and polity in Southeast and South Asia.

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BEYOND ELIADE: THE FUTURE OF THEORY IN RELIGION

The appearance of a study of Eliade¹ is a good occasion to estimate his place in the future of theory in religion. I use this phrase because of a degree of confusion which still reigns in the field of religious studies about what may be meant by "history of religions". This is brought out by Dudley (pp. 21-25) in relation to the disputes which animated scholars attending the 10th Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions in Marburg in 1960. The attempt was there made to separate the history of religions from theology and certain kinds of philosophy of religion, and a platform was devised which had among its signatories Eliade, Joseph Kitagawa and Charles Long. I think the simplest way to get out of confusion in these matters is to spell out the following distinctions.

First, there are, of course, various religious traditions and sub-traditions and one form of exploration is to study particular aspects of the life of a tradition. These may be called *particular* studies, and in the context of the history of religions aim to be value-free. But the methods can vary according to circumstances: they may involve philology, conventional history, sociological and anthropological approaches, of which the use of participant observation and, at one level, human dialogue is an important ingredient. Second, particular studies in differing traditions may invite comparisons. That is, aspects of separate histories may show resemblances. Naturally I am not thinking of those comparisons which are understandably regarded as odious: comparison in the scientific context is not judgmental. Third, theories about religion may be developed—and they can arise from various directions, out of the East of anthropology, the South-East of sociology, the South of psychology, the West of *Religionswissenschaft* or the North of history. Now it may be that some scholars believe that no general theory can stand up to the particular evidences, and some might even more extremely eschew all comparisons, even the harmless, not the odious, kind. But whether theories stand up is itself

¹ Guilford Dudley II, *Religion on Trial—Mircea and his critics*—Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1977, VII & 183 p., \$12.50.

partly an empirical issue. But only partly, since some theories and perchance all fruitful theories use key categories as types or patterns rather than as ingredients of universal law-like statements. I shall return to this matter, since it bears upon Dudley's discussion of the relation between Eliade and empiricism.

That some degree of theory is unavoidable in the study of religion is fairly plain if we attend to the following points: first, the use of general categories (such as the terms *numinous*, *sacrifice*, *god* and so forth) faces us with decisions of classification, which even if it is only at the theoretical level of butterfly-collecting, to use Lord Rutherford's dismissive analogy, still has some theoretical component; second, historical explanations involve some theoretical elements (such as views about patterns of human motivation, the likely effects of certain kinds of experience and so forth); and third, there is a laudable, but admittedly sometimes rash, nisus to see whether cross-cultural and other resemblances in the field of religions can be explained.

So the question which may be asked about Eliade, since he undoubtedly wields a theory, is how fruitful that theory is. Before turning thither, however, I would like to make the following observations. It is unfortunate that in certain areas schools take over subjects. A school can be seen as a movement within a field which defines methods against the background of a theory which itself should be open to scrutiny by independent methods. One thinks of Skinnerian behaviourism, Freudian analysis, functionalist sociology and so on. Thus whatever else we may think about Eliade's theory (and I for one find it fruitful, impressive and eccentric), there is no question of identifying history of religions with the Chicago school. But this is not at all to deny the great and encouraging influence which Eliade and his friends have had on the study of religion in a period when that influence and weight was needed.

A theory may bear different fruits. It may, for instance, suggest ways of further research, and this is probably more important than the question of whether it conforms to some methodological model, such as the empiricist theory of induction. This is, roughly, the line taken by Dr. Dudley, drawing somewhat on the work of Imre Lakatos, who of course owed much to the stimulus of Popper's philosophy of science. He writes (p. 126):

Recent methodological proposals in the sciences actually point in a very promising direction. Historians of religion can argue that comprehensive theories, or research programmes, are as indispensable for the advance of understanding in their field as they are in the natural sciences. They can take Lakatos' proposal seriously and apply it fruitfully to methodological formulations in *Religionswissenschaft*. The field desperately needs to commit itself to a research programme. It needs a core theory that can be pursued until its potentialities have been explored. Eliade is one of the very few modern historians of religion who has proposed a comprehensive theory of man's religious behaviour and thought. The core of his system is the postulates of the archaic ontology and the transconscious, the dynamics of hierophanies, symbols and archetypes, and the cosmicization of space and time. The protective belt of auxiliary hypotheses that can be adjusted or rejected are concepts such as the *axis mundi*, the Cosmic Tree, the *hieros gamos*, the analogies between human birth and the creation of the world in myth and ritual, festival time, the sexuation of the world, ritual androgynization, the New Year as cosmogony, orgy and reintegration, sacred stones as epiphanies, the coherence of all lunar symbolism the hidden sky (*Deus Otiosus*), the solarization of supreme beings, and many others.

Now it may be that Dudley's concept of a protective belt is itself too powerful a protective belt—a chastity belt that, so to say, prevents fruitfulness. For he remarks that Leach's criticisms of Eliade belong to that level, and Eliade can afford to make concessions and adjustments at that level. This is close to saying that Eliade's theory would stand whatever the empirical evidence as to the details of his scheme. And such an unfalsifiable theory could scarcely be the basis for a research programme with any cutting edge. However, let us first ask what a theory, such as Eliade's, might be expected to do.

It might, for one thing, supply a grammar of religious and other symbolism. I say *and other* here for a good reason little discussed either by Eliade or by his critics. It is a somewhat arbitrary matter how we divide up worldviews, and it is partly a matter of convention that we tend to assign the study of (say) Marxism to political scientists and the study of (say) Buddhism to religionists. It may of course be

argued that the sense of transcendence and of the sacred marks off religious worldviews from others; but this by itself should not imply the separation of studies (any more than the male-female differences should imply a differentiation into male and female biology). It is unfortunate that there is no simple expression in English covering practical and existential worldviews, whether religious or secular. I shall stick with *worldviews* for want of a better term, but certainly the right expression might have broken down a tendency we have to neglect the mythic and symbolic aspects of secular behaviour, or alternatively to treat them, as to some extent Eliade does, as fragmentary reflections of a more full-blooded symbolic life to be found in traditional religions. It might of course be part of a theory of symbolic behaviour that it appears "natural" to the actors—that the recognition of the symbolism is unconscious. Symbols that surface change their style. If so, it would be an easy fallacy for secular men to think that the symbolic life perishes with religion, and to identify the mythic with an archaic, not a modern way of looking at the world. (But modernity is part of the myth of modern men). So then, I would propose that a theory, such as Eliade's, ought to supply a grammar of symbolic behaviour, whether that falls under the rubric of traditional religion or not.

Now this immediately brings us up against the fact that the key polarity in Eliade's account of religious symbolism is that between the sacred and the profane. As Dudley notes, however, Eliade quotes with approval a remark by Roger Gaillois, that "the only helpful thing one can say of the sacred is contained in the very definition of the term: that it is the opposite of the profane". But this makes one wonder whether the religious polarity is not an instance of a more inclusive one—that is the polarity between that which has a positive emotional charge and that which does not. Men's symbolic thinking is related to feelings, for a worldview "makes sense" of the cosmos and of men's place in it because it helps somehow to exhibit patterns of meaning, and meaning has to do with a sense of worth, and this is a matter of feeling. Consider, negatively, the idea that some activity appears meaningless to a person. Thus for most Americans and for many other folk the playing of cricket is meaningless—and not just because the rules do not seem transparent but because one requires some form of initiation to make the activity seem beautiful, exciting,

an end in itself. It therefore seems reasonable to make use of some such concept as the power possessed by things, persons, etc.: that is the power to effect changes inside people—to alter their feelings. Here I lean towards the approach of van der Leeuw, though expanding the scope of his enquiry to range beyond religious worldviews. In brief I would suggest that we do not need to begin with the *sacred-profane* polarity as the starting-point of a systematic phenomenology, or grammar as I shall call it, of religion. Further there are some more particular features of Eliade's treatment of the sacred which may attract some questions. However, let me make my general claim a little more perspicuous by outlining very briefly the substance of the grammar of religion which might prove to be more inclusive than Eliade's.

A person or thing endowed with an emotional charge, which I shall call substance, may be in contact with another—and this in turn may be thought of in the widest way as a ritual or, to use J. L. Austin's term, *performative* contact. This contact can be conceived as either positive or negative, that is as a blessing or threat. If I were introduced to some great hero like Pele, the handshake and all would convey a kind of blessing: my substance would increase with even a minor infusion of that of the hero. Consequently the Latin word *hostis* meant both stranger and enemy. The approach of the stranger might be a threat: hospitality was a ritual means of establishing a positive relation with the stranger, and thus gaining something positive rather than negative from his presence. If for whatever reason you are yourself very strong, there may be emotional advantage in diminishing the other person's substance, by such rituals as insult, arrogance or (more extremely) torture.

Substance comes in forms of layers. Thus my own substance is built up most obviously of such layers as national identity (I participate ritually in the substance of Scotland). Then I participate in the profession of professing, and religion and philosophy in particular—so part of my substance is drawn from the worth of the job. Partly it is drawn from my place in the profession, that is from reputation, etc., which provides a kind of ordering of people's substance. One might see human behaviour from this point of view as involved in preserving or expanding individual substances.

Since communication of substance is essentially a ritual matter, the grammar of ritual itself becomes vital—e.g. the way in which the

substances of the past and future are made available, and the substances also which exist in other portions of space, not to mention those which transcend space and time.

A further aspect of a general theory would have to do with the relation between categories through which substances are differentiated. The more the emotional charge the more important boundaries round a concept may be, since proper ritual response is necessary for the charge to be communicated in a benign manner. Similarly where an entity goes through a re-categorization clarity of ritual becomes important, hence rites of passage. Since communication of substance is a matter of created affinity, much ritual implies getting into a condition of affinity with what one is confronted with. Hence the drawing of performative boundaries in relation to what is powerful, and in particular the sacred. So it may be that we do not need to begin with the sacred-profane polarity as an ultimate but see it in a wider theory of emotional charges and their ritual accompaniments. I might add that it seems to me that whatever some modern science may say about the momentariness of events and the insubstantiality of things, where feelings are involved men operate according to notions of what Lévy-Bruhl's translators called mystical participation. Or to put in another way: perhaps Plato through this theory of Forms reflected the way we think emotionally, thought not how we ought to think in regard to scientific exploration. And perhaps we should even eschew substance-thinking in regard to what moves us in feeling and ritual—it could be that Buddhism's attack on substance is a correct attack too upon's men's "natural" emotional life.

Now of course Eliade's fixing on the sacred-profane polarity as ultimate involves various other limbs of theory. For the sacred is conceived by him ontologically: what is perceived as sacred in a hierophany reflects an archetype attests to the primordial ontology, which Eliade characterizes as Parmenidean (the real is timeless and inexhaustible), Platonic (archetypal) and Indian (temporal experience is illusory). Attitudes to time, of course, permeate Eliade's whole theory of myth and history.

Now Eliade's theory is in its own way philosophical and speculative. There is, of course, nothing wrong in this, and indeed one sometimes wishes more historians of religion were bolder in theory. But there are theories and theories, and intentions behind them. It seems to me

that we have a problem where a theory in effect is an expression of a worldview, which is then brought to bear upon worldviews. For instance in the past there have been those who have pursued the comparative study of religion from a Christian-theological angle—consider such works a Farquhar's *The Crown of Hinduism*, Zaehner's *At Sundry Times*, Kraemer's *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*; and there have been others who have started from some other religious point of view—consider the works of Radhakrishnan and other products of modern Hindu thinking in which Christianity and other faiths are interpreted from a Hindu, and in particular a Vedantin, angle. But of course such essentially theological presentations are the subject matter of the history of religions, not exercises in it. Does this mean that all interpretative theories have to be eschewed? How do we draw the line between the pursuit of theology and the pursuit of Eliadean philosophy?

It is partly a matter of evidences, and partly a matter of intention. Revealed and authoritative spiritual messages are not accepted as part of the evidence brought to bear in establishing a theory of religions. That is, they are not brought to bear in their capacity as being normative for the investigator, for they have no such capacity. But of course in other respects a theory is to be tested by evidences: here Dudley comments, not altogether favourably, on Eliade's handling of evidence, e.g. from the New Testament and Zuni mythology. It was of course an aspect of Edmund Leach's fierce attack on Eliade in *The New York Review of Books* that Eliade failed a number of evidential tests (doing bad history, bad ethnology and bad psychology, he alleged). I do not think Eliade is altogether to be exempted from the charge that he sometimes is highly selective in his use of sources. But on the other hand he has undoubtedly brought together some highly suggestive symbolic complexes, especially in his major works on Yoga and shamanism.

It is worth adding that Guilford Dudley brings out well Eliade's normative thrust and his apologetics for a soteriology which will free people from "the terror of history": here Eliade is seen as guru. However, looking at Eliade's theory from the point of view of the study of religion, and more generally from within the ambit of the human sciences, it is important to note whether he yields fruitful accounts of some of the key notions which the religionist needs to wield. And

here I think he is open to criticism, and I shall illustrate this in relation to his analysis of myth and famous accounts of *illud tempus*. Here it is useful to reproduce a passage discussed by Dudley (p. 72, from *The Sacred and the Profane*, p. 97):

The mere recital of a myth causes an irruption of the sacred no matter what the narrative might be:

It is the irruption of the sacred into the world, an irruption narrated in the myths, that *establishes* the world as reality... To tell how thing came into existence is to explain them and at the same time indirectly to answer another question: *Why* did they come into existence? The *why* is always implied in the *how*—for the simple reason that to tell *how* a thing was born is to reveal an irruption of the sacred into the world, and the sacred is the cause of all real existence.

Certain things are clear. First, telling a myth is a kind of ritual act. Indeed one of the ways in which the literature of the history of religions can be misleading on myths is where the story (in print, paradigmatically, and thus reified) is divorced from the ritual telling. You can't divorce the nature of a myth from its use (hence the same story can be a fairy story or a legend). And Eliade is right in seeing a myth as ritually channelling some sort of power. But two questions arise: First, is he right in seeing the myhttelling as making available *illud tempus*? A subsidiary issue here is whether he is correct in polarizing so sharply the distinction between mythic and historical time. Second, is he right in assimilating all myths to a cosmogonic pattern?

Now much unclarity has been generated in these matters, even if (I admit) time tends to bafflement. Dudley, expounding Eliade, writes thus (p. 77):

Rituals not only regenerate individuals, but they also regenerate time itself. New Year rituals imply a return to *illud tempus*, where the cosmogonic act can be enacted.

What one can say about ritual enactment is that it may make available to us what occurred at a previous time. Let us consider the logic of this, and to make it easier I shall take the familiar instance of

Easter. The simplest version of the Easter story as reenacted at the festival is: "Jesus Christ is risen today". What occurred at one date is present at another date. It could also be said that what occurred at another place is available here at this place. Now the fact that a place can be represented in no way implies that the primary space is itself not literally space. The fact is that many people operate with the following spaces—their own area, then layers of more indefinite space beyond their area, and some kind of unknowable limit of the world: and vertically there is the sky (or layers thereof), culminating in heaven, a sort of para-space. Simplifying we may talk about: definite space, indefinite space and transcendental space. For certain purposes a charged line may be drawn between this-worldly space and transcendental space. One might wish to make a similar division of time. Again it does not follow that because one event is re-presented at a later date the first time is not literally a time, with a date. It may just be that some dates are more charged than others. Was Archbishop Ussher profoundly misguided, obtuse one might say, to place the date of the creation at 4004 B.C.? The problem arose because of the fact that the creation was represented as having happened before various pre-historical and historical happenings, and "before" implies a date. Or at least it implies belonging to an indefinite stretch of time which locates it very roughly. So far I see no special reason to differentiate out very sharply *illud tempus* from later dateable time. And still less is there reason to exclude from the realm of myth or sacred story those stories which refer to dated events (such as the siege of Troy or the resurrection of Jesus). If functionally, a story is narrated in a ritual context to re-present the substance of the original event, then that story should, in my view, be counted a myth. And the Easter story belongs to that category.

But of course cosmogonies speak of origins, beginnings. Why are origins important? Here perhaps we touch on an important part of Eliade's view of the archetypal significance of the creation myth set in *illud tempus*. Any "first" involving what is a highly charged transition from one level or category to another is seen as a prototype (thus: the first man to fly, the first man on the moon, the first motor car, etc.), and in ritually re-presenting such a first, one is celebrating, the type of thing in question. But also from a ritual point of view, if B is caused by A it partakes somewhat of A's power. But

creation involves a dialectical process. Thus if God creates man (say), then two truths have to obtain: first, man is like God in some measure because he derives his substance from God; but he is unlike God because, among other things, he is created as *man*, as having his own proper and peculiar substance and definition. So creatures in general are a mixture of good substance derived from the Creator and their own natures. Consequently, a feature of celebrations of Creation is their re-presenting the pristine essences of the world. But it does not follow that all myths are archetypally cosmogonic. What does follow only is that myths which celebrate new transitions have an analogy to creation myths.

Since those new transitions, existentially charged events and so on, can occur in the sphere of the dateable, there can be no ultimate contrast between archaic views of the world, as expressed in cosmogonic myths, and those which incorporate a strong sense of linear history. Here there is in any case a confusion between two notions of repetition in time. In one application of the idea types of events repeat themselves cosmically, as in the Hindu theory of *kalpas*. In the other application, a single event is replicated ritually. In the Christian tradition, for instance, an unrepeated linear series of events is replicated liturgically.

In his discussion Dudley relates Eliade to Foucault, in that both authors, he claims, perceive the mythic nature of modern man's historical consciousness. This, on the side of Eliade, seems a back-handed way of expressing his account of history. Some distinctions, in any case, are necessary. At one level, doing history is a rather technical research enterprise. At another level, though, it is a means of expanding a culture's consciousness of its past and that of the planet. As such it pushes back the temporal field of vision. But as Foucault perceives, modern preoccupation with history tends to take a further character, namely it tends towards patterning the past: and here I think we can genuinely begin to discern a mythic view of history, for the events and movements of this historical process now carry with them an air of existential significance. They "mean" something to us. Notable are the dialectical views of history found in Hegel and Marxism, but even Tolstoy's appreciation and expression of the messy and tangential ways history works bear its own mythic character. Of course, both Hegel and Marx wield great ab-

stractions, rather than seeing events created and moved by divine heroes and the like, as befits the mythological genre. But Marxist history one might say stands to certain metaphysical accounts of creation as salvation history stands to *Genesis*. In the latter pair we have a myth of redemption figuring divine persons and conscious acts, as compared with a myth of creation likewise figuring the divine person and his acts. In the former pair, we have a metaphysical history—a sort of ballet of abstractions, but moving in time—as compared with the dialectic unfolding of the One (for example) as depicted by Plotinus.

It is incidentally surprising that, almost naively, Eliade regards historicism as a typical product of those nations “for which history has never been a continuous terror. These thinkers would perhaps have adopted another viewpoint had they belonged to nations marked by the ‘fatality of history’” (quoted by Dudley, p. 71, from *Cosmos and History*, p. 152). Here we note Eliade’s Romanian roots. A word on this may be in order. Eliade can be considered under one aspect as a Romanian narodnik. His philosophy, underpinning his work in history of religions, has some existentialist roots (his attitude to time owes something to Heidegger), while his theory of the trans-conscious and his theory of archetypal symbols have Jungian affinities. But behind there stands the forbidden forest—archaic Romania. And Romanian experience has been peculiar: a Latin-speaking nation, compounded of Dacians and Roman colonists, which virtually vanished from recorded history for a millennium, then reemerged, Latin still, Orthodox in rite, and destined to maintain its identity through the peasant’s loyalty to the Liturgy, through long periods of foreign oppression. Identity means a continuous return to the history-less past. Eliade’s remarkable visit to India as a young man took him in the opposite direction from so much that pulled the Romanian intelligentsia, which owed much to its links with France, and which had too a somewhat dangerous (in the interwar period) liaison with German ideas. In differing ways the intelligentsia and the workers were attracted to central European historicism: for the workers Marxism was to prove less than liberating, for the Romanian Communist Party was forced to make accommodations with the Soviets. For Eliade, perhaps, the peasant spirit of the Romanians, so evident in the continuing fervors of religious belief, remains the salvific factor. So

Eliade's own theory has a way of functioning as a myth which "makes sense" of the Romanian experience.

Eliade's approach, via archetypes, not only incorporates a view about time which devalues the historical consciousness. It is also somewhat ahistorical. Guilford Dudley refers to him as the "antihistorian of religions" (p. 148). But there are diachronic processes which, according to Eliade, one can attend to: the tendency of a local symbol to approximate to its archetype constitutes the law-like principle through which the historian of religions can show how religions develop. This seems a rather constricted appreciation of what can be done.

First, there is historical investigation into the messy particularity of the histories of religions, etc. Second, there is the discernment not just of synchronic types, but diachronic ones too. Thus there is the fruitful field of considering the various kinds of moves which one cultur makes when brought into contact massively with another—as happens along what may be called the White Frontier, i.e. the interface between Western culture ad technology on the one hand and the various traditional cultures of the "third world". There are discernible types or patterns of reaction. This goes beyond the tendency to universality referred to above. Third, there is the construction of a grammar of religion, where the interplay between the various types of symbols is articulated, and a general theory constructed. Further, if religious history is to be undertaken effectively there must be some way of discerning what count as the religious factors in a given situation (this is a bit like the discernment of economic factors when one is doing economic history). Then one must see those in relation to other factors. Putting it crudely, sometimes religion is a dominant force, and sometimes it is moulded by non-religious factors. Some estimate of this helps to clarify the notion that religion plays a significant part in influencing human history. It seems to me a defect of Eliade's approach that he tends to ignore anthropological, sociological and economic estimates of religion, partly because he looks on the scientific enterprise as essentially reductionist. Now it is true that forms of reductionism and (its brother) projectionism have played a leading role in 19th and 20th century analyses of religion on the part of social scientists in particular; but logically the scientific student of religion should be methodologically agnostic, as

I have called it elsewhere². That is, he should treat the objects of religious experience and beliefs as factors independently of whether they exist/are true.

We do not need to decide whether Allah actually revealed anything to Muhammad to see that Allah impinged on Muhammad's consciousness and thereby changed the course of human history. A neutralist approach to the socalled social sciences is thus possible, and is something which also embraces the phenomenological history of religions.

Thus the religionist is at least partly in the business of explanations, for the very attempt to distinguish between internal and external factors (that is, internal or external to the religious factor or more generally to the factors inherent in the symbolic life) implies the possibility of showing how the two sides are in interplay, and how one can explain historical developments in these terms. This after all was the procedure, roughly speaking, of Max Weber. And here a certain aggressiveness may be needed—it is a strange world where economic life (itself suffused so heavily with symbols) is seen so widely as a subject of serious scientific enquiry, and where the exploration of religious and other forms of symbolic behaviour is thought of so frequently as just a private affair. From the angle of the social sciences, religion is one of the most important subjects studied in academe. Thus though I have much admiration both for Eliade's work and the way he has given stature to the history of religions, my regret is that his creative hermeneutic is in the end restricted—the vehicle of a certain worldview, and a means of giving life to much of man's archaic religious symbolism, and yet somehow cut off from the wider explanatory task which religion can and should perform.

In brief, it may be that Guilford Dudley, in proposing Eliade's core theory as a research program, is not bold enough in the step which has to be taken *beyond* Eliade.

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² This is a principal theme of my *The Science of Religion and the Sociology of Knowledge*, Princeton University Press, 1973.

BOOK REVIEWS

BLACKER, Carmen, *The Catalpha Bow, A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan* — London, 1975.

C'est avec beaucoup d'habileté littéraire, frôlant par moment un style journalistique, que Blacker nous brosse un tableau de l'état actuel du chamanisme au Japon. L'auteur réunit dans cette étude les résultats de ses propres recherches sur le terrain à l'analyse des matériaux élaborés par la recherche japonaise.

La brève description d'une scène tirée du Nô *Aoi no ue* constitue, certes, une entrée réussie en la matière difficile que Blacker développe par la suite dans quinze chapitres de longueur quasiment identique. Dans les premières pages, Blacker nous expose quelques traits généraux propres aux 'chamans' terme qui couvre à la fois les notions de *miko*, medium, et d'ascète en tant que guérisseur. Ces quelques remarques sur le chaman en général sont suivies de références à ce phénomène trouvées, par exemple, dans certains récits du *Kojiki*. Etroitement liée au problème de l'identité ethnique du peuple japonais, l'existence, à partir du 5e/6e siècle, de deux types différents de chaman—type sibérien et type polynésien—est généralement admise au Japon.

Passant en revue les matériaux—au sens large du mot—sur lesquels doit s'appuyer la recherche, Blacker fait mention des mediums et ascètes (sur)vivants et de leur comportement, ainsi que des évidences littéraires puisées dans le *Konjaku monogatari*, le *Nihon ryōiki*, les pièces de Nô, etc, tout en soulignant, à juste titre, le rôle crucial qui revient à la recherche de Yanagita Kunio et de Oriuchi Shinobu en cette matière, comme d'ailleurs dans les autres domaines du folklore japonais.

Le deuxième chapitre est consacré aux êtres mystérieux convoqués par la force des chamans, en premier lieu les *kami* (inférieurs) sous leur forme conventionnelle de manifestation soit comme serpent, soit comme veillard. A ce propos il est intéressant d'observer, comme Blacker le fait, que certains des mediums actuels 'voient' leur *kami* sous la même forme que ceux-ci sont représentés dans les pièces de Nô, soit sous celle de vieillard. Le deuxième groupe d'êtres auxquels sont adressées les opérations faites par les chamans, sont les esprits des ancêtres, appelés *tama* et que l'auteur traduit ("without misinterpretation" ??) comme "soul"(âme). Or, l'énumération des diverses caractéristiques des *tama*, brièvement esquissées, aurait pu suggérer une traduction plus précise, comme par exemple 'esprit sensoriel ou vital'.

De façon générale Blacker facilite beaucoup la compréhension du lecteur en précisant clairement les distinctions à faire en la matière, en l'occurrence en analysant les types d'ancêtres (pacifiés, *muenbotoke*). Il en va de même pour l'examen des "witch animals" (animaux magiciens) qui se présentent sous de nombreuses apparences (principalement chien/renard ou serpent), et peuvent s'emparer du corps humain (par malice ou dans une intention donnée). Les implications sociales de la possession d'un être par un renard, par exemple, *kitsune-tsukai* ou *kitsune-mochi*, sont examinées, quoiqu'on aurait pu souhaiter voir davantage approfondi l'aspect psychique des narrations que Blacker intercale fort habilement dans son exposé. C'est là d'ailleurs un des traits pertinents de ce livre, en constituant à la fois sa force et sa faiblesse, que est d'utiliser largement des récits exemplaires destinés à illustrer tel ou tel point d'investigation, ce qui fait que le livre devient en grande partie descriptif, description néanmoins, qui fait souvent le charme particulier de cette étude. Passant en revue les notions de l'au-delà, Blacker souligne l'importance qu'occupent, en ce qui concerne le chaman, les montagne et examine la notion de *tokoyo* et de *ryûgû*, en se servant du matériel abondant des légendes populaires. Ici comme dans les autres chapitres, l'argumentation de l'auteur est soigneusement appuyée par des notes, atteignant parfois une longueur considérable (cf. par exemple p. 325, 328), mais en général substantielles et bien documentées à partir de sources importantes, aussi bien primaires que secondaires.

Parlant de l'ascèse à laquelle doivent se soumettre les chamans, l'auteur nous informe des divers types de *gyô* ou pratique, à savoir, des jeûnes, ablution et récitation de formules, etc. A propos des mommies (*miira*), on pourrait peut-être ajouter que la pratique qui consistait à se faire enterrer vivant, au terme d'austérités diététiques devant engendrer des forces miraculeuses, fut attestée (en tant qu'exercice des *yamabushi*) dès le moyen âge par les rapports de missionnaires.

La distinction faite en ce qui concerne les mots, les sons magiques, les extraits des sûtra, formules *shingon*, *dhâranî*, etc. semble quelque peu artificielle ou pour le moins exagérée. Ici on aurait souhaité que l'auteur fasse davantage allusion à la notion fort complexe de *kotodama* et *kotoage* qui n'est citée que *passim* en différents endroits du livre.

Après un examen détaillé de l'ancien *miko* dans un des chapitres les plus pertinents ("The Ancient Sibyl", p. 104 sq.) et qui fait prudemment usage des travaux japonais (ceux de Matsumura et d'Orikuchi), l'auteur passe au problème des 'divinités vivantes', fondatrices (*kyôso*) de nombreuses nouvelles sectes, en particulier Nakayama Miki (Tenri-kyô) et Deguchi Nao (Omoto).

Retraçant les étapes de l'apprentissage des *itako* (ou *ichiko*)—medium aveugle—and de leurs tâches (*kami-oroshi*, *hotoke-oroshi*),

Blacker mentionne de nombreux récits qu'elle a recueillis personnellement ou qu'elle a compilés à partir de travaux japonais, ce qui enrichit le sujet traité, mais fait quelque peu oublier au lecteur les éléments essentiels. Il aurait été également intéressant d'insister sur les 'mots tabou' (p. 152 sq.) que mentionne Blacker dans ce même chapitre.

En ce qui concerne l'initiation des ascètes et les dons qui leur sont attribués, Blacker se réfère principalement au monde des *yamabushi* comme elle l'a fait en ce qui concerne les voyages visionnaires ou symboliques. S'il est certain que le rapport entre *yamabushi* et *tengu* n'est pas chose facile à élucider, l'auteur aurait trouvé matière à argument dans certains ouvrages que lui-même cite en bibliographie. D'autre part la rencontre personnelle de l'auteur avec une femme-*tengu* (p. 185) a un caractère trop anecdotique, ce qui ne peut lui faire mériter qu'une place modeste au sein des notes. C'est cette manière de mélanger réflexion et argumentation personnelle, expérience vécue sur le terrain et aperçu des résultats de la recherche japonaise, etc., qui au fil des chapitres ordonnés pourtant de façon fort systématique et logique, risque de faire oublier quelque peu au lecteur attentif les éléments propres au chamanisme japonais.

A propos d'un exemple de voyage symbolique, Blacker décrit le *mineiri* des *yamabushi* dans l'Omine et le Haguro, exercice auquel l'auteur avait personnellement participé. Ce rituel reprend sous forme symbolique le voyage que fait le pratiquant en passant par la mort, pour être conçu de nouveau et renaitre enfin. Les ascètes en reviennent avec des dons prétendument efficaces qu'ils mettent ensuite au service de la guérison de maladies, mais qu'ils utilisent aussi comme simple démonstration de leur pouvoir. L'auteur s'étend ensuite très en détail sur le rituel de *yorigitô* qui consiste soit à faire descendre un *kami* dans le corps d'un medium, soit à faire passer un esprit du corps d'un malade à celui du medium, c'est à dire sur la personne sur laquelle est ensuite opéré l'exorcisme.

Un bon exemple d'ethnographie reposant sur des observations personnelles de l'auteur, aussi bien que sur les récits d'autres chercheurs nous est donné dans l'intéressante description et analyse des *takusen-matsuri*, 'fête de divination'.

Parmi les remarques concernant les pratiques observées autour du mont Ontake, très riches en détails et en informations, beaucoup d'éléments de moindre importance trouveraient une meilleure place dans les notes, ce qui aiderait à rendre le texte plus concis et, de ce fait plus clair en ce qui concerne l'argumentation de l'auteur. C'est ainsi que la description du paysage autour de l'Ontake est à mettre sur le même plan que l'indication de la qualité d'une soupe dégustée dans un des stands sur les flancs de la montagne (p. 286). Rejoignant par le style celui d'un carnet de voyage aux traits anecdotiques, les cha-

pitres sur les oracles en montagne auraient certainement gagné en intérêt, si l'on avait remplacé, par exemple, les parties descriptives par la transcription ou la traduction littérale de l'enregistrement d'un oracle, ce qui aurait pu être fait également dans un chapitre précédent (p. 242) en traduisant ce qu'un medium nommé Hiroshima Ryūum avait confié à son carnet de voyage.

Le lecteur aurait sans doute souhaité trouver quelques remarques quant à la crédibilité des réponses faites par les médiums, d'autres sur la réaction des fidèles en cas d'échecs de prognostics, avant de passer à un résumé des différentes étapes de la démarche scientifique de Blacker et des résultats obtenus dans cette étude sur un thème fascinant et qui est, en général, traité avec beaucoup d'attention et d'exactitude. A ce propos on pourrait tout au plus s'interroger sur la lecture *dagini* (d'habitude *dakini*, p. 55), *Akimine*, généralement *Aki no mine*; *shû*, la pratique est plutôt *shu* (p. 97), *Tenshô kôtai jingu* plutôt *jingû* (p. 134), mais ce sont là des fautes de frappe plutôt que des lectures erronées. Le *Shasekishiû* cependant est décidément un texte du XIII^e siècle et non pas du XIV^e !(p. 198)

Ces quelques imperfections mineures retenues au cours de la lectures, ne sauraient néanmoins affecter la valeur d'une étude richement illustrée et fort utile par un glossaire des termes techniques, étude qui est d'autant plus importante et '*arigatai*' (meritant la gratitude) que son objet est, comme Blacker le signale dans la préface, en rapide voie de disparition.

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SCARPI, P., *Lettura sulla religione classica — L'inno omerico a Demeter*, Università di Padova, Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia LVI — Firenze, Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1976, XII + 260 p., Lire 9.000.

This book analyses the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* in the language of structural anthropology, drawing up a "typology" of the various themes of the poem according to the principles of Lévi-Strauss. If one is not oneself an adherent of this school of interpretation I am not sure how much fresh insight one will gain from the work, but it does raise a number of interesting questions.

Scarpi begins with an analysis of the themes of sight and hearing, which as he considers run through the poem and are fundamental to it, and he compares the story of Metaneira, who sees Demeter putting Demophon in the fire and is punished for this, with similar myths

where someone sees or hears what he should not. This suggests a link between the prohibition against seeing what Demeter does and the more general prohibition against seeing or hearing the Mysteries if one is not initiated, thus supporting the view that the nursing of Demophon is in some way a model for initiation. Scarpi's suggestion (p. 14 n. 22) that Persephone's cry for help when she is carried off (*Dem.* 20 etc.) may have some connection with the lacchus cry in the procession before the Mysteries, is also interesting (cf. perhaps lachē as an Oceanid at *Dem.* 419). But if this were right one would have to assume a radical change in the character of the cry, as in the classical period it is essentially joyful (cf. *Frogs* 316ff.).

He then discusses what he calls the "regime alimentare" in the cultural system of the *Hymn*, arguing that the Rape of Core is a "mediation" between nature and culture. He adopts the theory that Core's flower-gathering represents a pre-cereal culture of edible flowers, contrasting with the introduction of agriculture. I cannot accept this view of her anthology, but would agree that the myth is connected with the theme of nature *versus* culture. This, however, is such a vague and general concept that it does not seem to tell one much. Scarpi also sees core as a "mediator" between heaven and Hades, and Demeter between gods and men, again no doubt quite correctly.

The third section compares the myth of the Rape with Attic marriage customs, and draws some interesting parallels. The close similarity of the Mysteries to marriage rites has long been known, but one needs to define more clearly what this meant for an actual bride in the historical period, when at Athens at least there was no question of marriage by abduction. Was marriage seen as a "positive" counterpart to the Rape of Core, whose associations were rather with death and mourning? How prominent was the sorrow of the mother at the loss of her daughter? Was the "abduction" motif more important at some time in the past? It survived as a practice at Sparta.

Scarpi concludes with a lengthy analysis of the narrative of Demeter's reception at Eleusis, culminating in her nursing of Demophon. Her attempt to immortalise him by putting him in the fire is compared with other related myths, and is seen in a Lévi-Straussian way as an instance of "cooking" as a mediation between uncooked and burnt, and this in turn as a mediation between Hades and heaven. As the "first initiate" Demophon gains special honour after death by favour of Demeter, as the initiates also are promised a better fate.

This bare outline of what seem to me to be the leading themes of this book does not do justice to the ingenuity with which the "polarities" in the myths are worked out in detail. But I must confess that to the non-initiate the language of structuralism appears as irrelevant to ones understanding of Greek literature and religion as the subtleties of ancient allegory. In both cases a rigid philosophical

system has been used to dissect the living tissues of poetry and mythology. I leave it to those who are themselves converts to this school to decide whether Scarpi has faithfully applied the Master's principles in his analysis of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.

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The Vedic Experience. Mantramañjari. An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration edited and translated with introductions and notes by Raimundo PANIKKAR — London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1977, XXXVIII and 937 pages.

This collection of excerpts from the Vedic hymns and prose texts is intended to offer "at once an initiation into the primary sources and an invitation to personal reflection and meditation". As such it should "facilitate the meeting of East and West". The author, a Roman Catholic priest and professor of Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, wishes to convey more than mere information; "it could be that the message of these pages has transforming power" (p. 4). It is true, though sometimes forgotten, that considerable parts of the Veda are not only highly important religious and literary documents but also works of art and sources of inspiration and edification. Philologists, attempting to find in the often floating ideas of this literature complete and well-considered mythological and theological systems have no doubt often missed the exalted fulfilment which contemplation could bring to the ancient practitioners. Therefore, an attempt at detecting the deeper meaning of the visions, beliefs and conceptions as they stood in the eyes of their protagonists and at making this meaning valuable and fruitful for modern men is no doubt legitimate. Provided however that the translations of the original texts, the explanations and introductory sections of such a book are possibly reliable.

It may be said that within the framework the compiler has given himself this is a good collection of on the whole tolerably reliable translations, sufficiently explained and enthusiastically introduced. Generally speaking, the level of information is adjusted to the needs of those for whom the beautifully produced volume is intended. The author has succeeded in throwing light on the various commonly human, symbolical and psychological aspects of the Veda—of course as he views them—and that often in clear, not infrequently in somewhat romantic and emotional wording.

It should however be noticed that sections and arguments such as

that on p. 725-730 are no interpretations of the original texts in the proper sense of the term but free elucidations of what in the author's opinion is their content, "meant to help us have the proper attitude of heart and mind as we approach the selected texts, which . . . are simply companions on the road toward the final station of Man" (p. 795). Translations and commentaries are moreover not always in accordance with the newest philological interpretations. Thus the rendering of the Sāvitrī (RV. 3, 62, 10) "We meditate upon the glorious splendor of the Vivifier divine. May he himself illumine our minds!" should be replaced bij "We hope to obtain that desirable radiance of god Savitar, who is expected to stimulate (inspire) our visions!" Although many modern publications are mentioned in the notes, other recent books and articles have escaped the author's attention. Another drawback of the book is its organization which not only led the compiler to collect in the same chapter texts taken from various sources, but also necessitated reverting to the same deity or topic on different pages, the distribution of many explanations over several places and a considerable number of unpractical cross references. There are moreover several lapses in the rendering of technical terms. The Āranyakas do not deal with the speculations and spirituality of forest dwellers who have renounced the world (p. 32), but contain material which was to be imparted to and studied by advanced students in the solitude of the forest, because it was too secret and esoteric, too uncanny and dangerous to be communicated and studied in the villages. The explanations of the terms *loka*, *sānti* and *ahamkāra* (p. 405; 407; 881; 304; 535) are not wholly adequate; *abhaya* is "safety" rather than "fearlessness" (p. 298); the etymological explanations of *rta* and *rtu* (p. 350) are incorrect, those of *yukta* (p. 444), *pātaka* (p. 458) etc. incomplete; *dhāman* does not mean "decree"; *kratu* not "will", *dakṣa* not "power" (p. 510); *āyus* is not "vital power" (p. 534), but "a complete lifetime". The characterization "Varuṇa is a Sky-God" (p. 506) is decidedly antiquated. The paragraphs on Indra (p. 199), Rudra (p. 284), Agni Vaiśvānara (p. 330), the *soma* plant (p. 364) are too incomplete, that on Śrī (p. 315 f.) is incomplete and partly incorrect; that on Agni as one of the most anthropomorphic symbols (p. 327) can easily create misunderstanding. Some titles of hymns etc. (e.g. p. 635, n° 24; p. 637, n° 26) are too suggestive. Not all explanations of mythological figures will be subscribed to by the generality of Vedic scholars.

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PIJPER, G. F., *Studien over de geschiedenis van de Islam in Indonesia 1900-1950* — Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1977, 160 p., fl. 28.—.

Dr. Pijper has served as an adviser on Islamic affairs to the Dutch colonial government in Indonesia from 1925-1951 and as such has collected most interesting material on Indonesian Islam during that period. In this publication he deals with four subjects: the mosques of Java, the panghulu's of Java (panghulu is the title of Islamic officials), reformism in Indonesian Islam and the last Wednesday of the month Safar, generally considered in Indonesia as a dangerous day of doom. Everywhere in this book Pijper's love for his subject, his feeling of friendly connection with his Muslim friends and his careful attention for details show clearly. The book is written in beautiful, though somewhat old-fashioned Dutch. Altogether it makes delightful reading. I miss a list explaining the many Arabic, Javanese and Indonesian words used. An English translation might be considered but I am afraid that some of the flavour will get lost by translation.

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BOUMAN, Johan, *Gott und Mensch im Koran*, eine Strukturform religiöser Anthropologie anhand des Beispiels Allah und Muhammad — Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977, 256 p.

In a very readable exposition Dr. Bouman of Marburg University deals with the relation of God and man and the position of man in the Qur'ān. The heavy subtitle of the book would not seem to be very necessary. Although the word 'Strukturform' occurs several times in the course of the argument, it does not play a decisive rôle. The book comes down to a discussion of God and man in the Qur'ān and as such it is certainly valuable and worth while reading. The first part explains the relation of God and man as seen from the side of God's activities, especially His creation of man and His guidance. The second part, entitled 'Interlude', deals with God's justice and mercy towards man. The third part discusses man, his position as the khalīfa (vice-gerent) of God, his natural religion, the prophets and Muhammad as the seal of the prophets, the different categories of humankind (the umma, the unbelievers, the people of the book) and the final destination of man.

I have two questions about Bouman's book. In the first place

Bouman brings in quite often a comparison between the Qur'anic view of God and man and the Jewish and Christian one. This is quite legitimate, of course, but I cannot avoid the feeling that it is usually done to show that the Islamic view is the less satisfactory one. Also the exposition of the Qur'anic view of Jesus Christ does not sufficiently allow for the very positive elements of appreciation of 'Isā in the Qur'an. In this way the old antagonistic manner of dealing with the Qur'an and with Islam is still hovering above Bouman's expositions.

In the second place I wonder whether Bouman has made himself sufficiently free from Hendrik Kraemer's view on the Qur'anic concept of God. According to Kraemer God is pictured in Islam as white-hot majesty, devouring man's freedom and responsibility. Bouman's book is a refutation of this view—and rightly so—but now and again Kraemer's opinion crops up, for instance on page 4/5, where Bouman agrees with Kraemer that in Islam there is no real possibility for an anthropology or for a together-ness of God and man. Also on page 178/9 after a very positive treatment of Daud Rahbar's God of Justice all of a sudden Bouman contends that Rahbar's interpretation cannot be the final word, because—and here again Kraemer is quoted—Allah is in the first place not a God of Justice but the incomparable, inscrutable, almighty God. Bouman could have put aside Kraemer's thesis without in any way harming his own line of argument.

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THE RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF DIVINE MULTIPLE BODY PARTS IN THE ATHARVA VEDA

I

It is well known that multiple body parts is one of the most characteristic features attributed to the divine in Indian art. Less well known is that this iconographic convention has an extensive literary usage prior to its plastic appearance around the Christian era. From the outset of its literary usage, the range of divinity described with multiple body parts and forms is noticeably restricted. In the Rig Veda, the earliest text within the Vedic tradition, the multiplicity convention mainly defines those deities associated with the act of cosmic creation.¹ Of the several creation theories set forth in the Rig Veda,² one cosmogonic view concurs well with the divine multiplicity image. This mythopoetic view understands cosmic creation as an intensification of the human birth-giving process. Just as a mother gives birth by emitting from her own body the completely structured form, so a creator god emits from his own being the forms that comprise the phenomenal world. A creator god is able to emit, or 'give birth' as it were, to the universe because he encloses within himself the totality of parts and forms comprising phenomenal diversity.³ Cosmic parturition is thus the underlying religious significance of divine multiple bodily parts and forms in the Rig Veda.⁴

The present study aims to isolate the multiplicity references in the

¹ Doris Srinivasan, "The Religious Significance of Multiple Bodily Parts to Denote the Divine: Findings from the Rig Veda", *Asiatische Studien*, XXIX, 2 (1975), 137-179—hereafter cited as "RV Multiplicity".

² W. Norman Brown, "Theories of Creation in the Rig Veda", *JAOS* 85 (1965), 23-34.

³ Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", 178.

⁴ Possibly the theory of cosmic parturition goes back to an Indo-Iranian stratum. Note the idea (cited by J. de Menasce "Le témoignage de Jayhānī sur le mazdéisme", *Donum natalicum H. S. Nyberg oblatum* [Uppsala, 1954], p. 52), that Ohrmazd (the later form of Ahura Mazda) produces the whole world out of himself. Divine multiplicity also appears in the Avesta. For example, Mithra, in Mihir Yasht XXI. 82, has "thousand senses" [ears?] "and ten thousand eyes..." (see James Darmesteter, *The Zend-Avesta*, in *Sacred Books of the East* 32 [1883], Pt. 2, 139-140; fn. 1, p. 140).

Atharva Veda (AV), in order to determine, first, whether the AV passages relate to the Rig Vedic findings. Second, this study (allied to the investigation of a broader problem) is undertaken to advance a general understanding of the religious significance of multiple bodily parts and forms in Vedic literary developments of the first millennium B.C.⁵ In both respects, the AV is most instructive.

The importance of the AV for the purposes of this study lies in the extraordinary span of the material. Although the AV is assuredly younger in compilation than the Rig Veda (RV), it contains themes that are undoubtedly older than many ṛgvedic subjects.⁶ At the same time, about one seventh of the AV consists of passages parallel with the RV; however, the AV *samhitā* often amplifies upon the material shared—in variant wordings or word order—with the RV *samhitā*.

In the area of cosmogonic speculation, the AV does more than enlarge upon the speculative thoughts in the RV; the AV invents a variety of creative Powers and details concerning their omnipotent quality, their creative activity, the relationship between the Power and the empiric world and the possibility of gaining knowledge of the Powers, which surpass in originality and speculative complexity the Rig Vedic cosmogonic notions.⁷ The degree of complexity approximates the speculations⁸ of the Yajur Veda *Saṃhitās* and the main Brāhmaṇas.⁹ Indeed, the level of cosmogonic speculation in the hymns of the AV may best be described as pre-Upaniṣadic, and as such, leading into the ferment of thought represented by the oldest of these philo-

⁵ A series of philological inquiries into the religious significance of multiple bodily parts in Vedic texts is part of a larger study in progress and dealing with the religious significance of the multiplicity convention in early Indian art. The philological analyses terminate with texts dating roughly to the beginning of the Christian era. This *terminus ad quem* coincides with the regular appearance in Indian iconography of the multiplicity convention.

⁶ Jan Gonda (*Vedic Literature*, Vol. I, fasc. 1, in *A History of Indian Literature* [Wiesbaden, 1975], p. 275), rightly cautions us to "distinguish between the time at which poems were composed, the periods in which their component parts or the ideas expressed were moulded into concrete form... and the period of ultimate codification...".

⁷ Cf. L. Renou, "Études Vediques", in *Bulletin de la Maison Franco-Japonaise*, N.S., Tome IV, No. 1 (1955), 38-39; Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, p. 295.

⁸ F. Edgerton, "The Philosophic Materials of the Atharva Veda", in *Studies in Honor of Maurice Bloomfield* (New Haven, 1920), p. 123.

⁹ Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, p. 275. Cf. M. Bloomfield, *The Atharvaveda*, in *Grundriss der Indo-Arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde* (Strassburg, 1899), 1-5.

sophic texts.¹⁰ This is because, in India, the beginnings of philosophy develop directly out of advances made in cosmogonic speculations.¹¹ Thus since the AV reflects both older and younger speculative tendencies, the possibility exists that the text can act as an indicator of possible multiplicity conceptualizations at the beginning of the Upaniṣadic period.

Speculative content is only a small portion of the AV. The saṃhitā consists mainly of magical and ritual formulas.¹² It is in these hymns that herbs, plants, grains, amulets, animals, etc. are attributed divinity and addressed to appease evil, bless the sacrificer and curse his enemies. While such prayers and charms are present in the other saṃhitās, they are more prevalent in the AV.

References to multiple bodily parts and forms occur in the speculative, magical and ritualistic hymns of the AV. These references were collected in the following manner:

1. Numerical terms were checked in W. D. Whitney, *Index Verborum to the published text of the Atharva-Veda* (New Haven, 1881), for possible nominal, adjectival or compound usage with the bodily parts or forms of a deity, divine principle, or magical entity.

2. Collective terms such as *viśva-*, *puru-*, *viśvatas* were checked in the same way.

3. Scanned also in the *Index* were terms (e.g. *tanū-*, *dhāman-*, *rūpa-*, *nāman-*) which when declined in the plural denote or imply multiple bodies or forms of divine beings, principles and magical entities.

In this way, around 55 multiplicity references were noted in the Śaunakīya recension of the Atharva Veda (hereafter AVŚ).¹³ About

¹⁰ N. J. Shende, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Atharvaveda* (Poona, 1952), Chap. IX; Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, p. 295.

¹¹ F. Edgerton, *The Beginnings of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1965), see Introduction. W. Norman Brown, *Man in the Universe* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966), pp. 16-42.

¹² For an excellent synopsis on the similarity of aims in the magical and speculative hymns, see Edgerton, *Beginnings*, pp. 21-23. Cf. *The Vedic Age*, Vol. I, in R. C. Majumdar (gen. ed.), *The History and Culture of the Indian People* (London, 1951), p. 442.

¹³ As is well known, there are two extant recensions of the Atharva Veda Saṃhitā; there is the AVŚ and the Atharva Veda Paippalāda (hereafter AVP). It should be clear from the above methodological statement, that Whitney's *Index*

two-thirds of these passages deal with cosmogonic or cosmographic themes. There is a high degree of correlation between the significance of the multiplicity references in these passages and the above mentioned Rig Vedic findings. As will be shown in Section II below, almost every divinity described with the multiplicity convention is either a creator god already associated with the convention in the RV, or a creative principle specifically invented by the Atharvan poets to express their speculative probings. Further, the theory of creation as cosmic parturition also continues. Section III contains an analysis of those multiplicity passages appearing in the magic sūktas. In these passages the multiplicity image is not applied to a creator god; nevertheless its meaning in these references reflects its meaning in the cosmogonic and cosmographic contexts.

II

A considerable number of the AV divinities denoted by multiple bodily parts and forms stem from the older stratum of Rig Vedic thought. Varuna, Rudra, Indra, Agni, Sūrya, Tvaṣṭṛ and a Cosmic Bull are already represented with multiple parts and forms in their capacity as part of a particular group of creator gods. In the RV, these gods belong to a group of deities called Asuras. Though the subject of much controversy, the meaning of the term *asura-* appears to be 'a being', in particular 'a High Being' possessing *asu-* ('life, vital energy').¹⁴ In the RV, *asura-* is not solely applied to gods; it may equally well designate a demon, thus indicating the original ambivalent

served as the primary tool in finding AV multiplicity references. As this is an index of the words in the AVS recension, the present paper likewise reflects this emphasis. However, variant readings are noted as found in the Kashmirian AVP, edited and emended by L. C. Barret, *The Kashmirian Atharva Veda* in *JAOS* 26-50 (Bks. 1-15); (Bk. 6 in *JAOS* 34 by Edgerton); Bks. 16 and 17 in *AOS* 9 (New Haven, 1936); Bk. 18 in *JAOS* 58; Bks. 19 and 20 in *AOS* 18 (New Haven, 1940). The Orissa ms. of the AVP, edited by D. Bhattacharyya, Paippalāda Samhitā of the Atharvaveda I (Book I), Calcutta, 1964; II (Books II-IV) Calcutta, 1970, has not been available to me. For a comparison between Book I of the AVS and Book I of the AVP (both Orissan and Kashmirian mss.), see L. Renou, "Notes sur la version 'Paippalāda' de l'Atharva-Veda", *Journ. Asiatique*, vol. 252 (1964), 421-450; vol. 253 (1965), 15-42.

¹⁴ The term *asura-* may be understood as derived from the noun *asu-* plus the suffix *-ra-*. On the etymology of *asura-* and some of the recent controversy on the derivation of this term see Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", fn. 13, p. 144.

significance of the term.¹⁵ When applied to a god, *asura*-hood is closely allied with a wondrous creative power. This power is often referred to by the term *māyā*.¹⁶ *Māyā* enables an Asura to create phenomenal forms (*rūpas*).¹⁷ The forms thus created may be the material forms in the empiric world, or they may be the visible outer forms or manifestations of the supreme being. Already within the RV, this group of creator gods is supplanted in the younger sections by demigurus whose creative energy, no longer dependent upon *māyā*, is stimulated by the power of the Vedic sacrifice.¹⁸ It is thus of considerable interest that the AV retains numerous references to the multiple body parts and forms of gods who in the RV represent an older layer of thought on cosmogony and divine manifestation.

A word about the use of *asura*- in the AV. Its predominant usage, in the plural, is to designate a demonic group at conflict with the Vedic gods.¹⁹ However, a degree of ambivalence still adheres to the term. A few plural occurrences refer to benevolent High Beings capable of wielding creative power. In AVŚ 6.108.3 Asuras are said to have wisdom; in AVŚ 10.10.26 (AVP 16.109 which reads *surāḥ*) and 8.9.24 (AVP 16.20) they are included in a series enumerating positive creatures inhabiting the ordered Vedic universe. Three references link Asuras with *māyā*. Asuras, says AVŚ 8.10.22 (AVP 16.135) subsist on *māyā*; the compound *asuramāyā-* used in AVŚ 3.9.4 (AVP 3.7.5) shows the close connection the Atharvans made between the two concepts. Further, AVŚ 6.72.1 indicates acquaintance with the notion that

¹⁵ This was first pointed out by A. Bergaigne, *La Religion Védique* III (Paris, 1883), 67-88.

¹⁶ *Māyā* has been defined in the Veda as "incomprehensible insight, wisdom, judgment and power enabling its possessor to create something or to do something ascribed to mighty beings". (J. Gonda, *Four Studies in the Language of the Veda* [The Hague, 1959], p. 126).

¹⁷ See Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", 143-162. Several verses to Indra (called *asura* in RV 1.174.1; 8.90.6, etc.) give clear indication of the power of *māyā*. RV 3.53.8 ab says that Indra is in the habit of becoming every *rūpa*, in effecting *māyās* around his own body, and verse RV 6.47.18c says that this characteristic of Indra's—to be 'multiform' (*pururūpa*)—is due to his *māyās*. Given the basic meaning of *māyā*, it must be inferred that *māyā* in these verses applies to the special ability of a divine Being to create *rūpa*.

¹⁸ Cf. Brown, "Theories", 26-27.

¹⁹ *Asura*- is used in this sense in AVŚ 2.27.3,4; 4.23.5; 6.7.2,3; 8.5.3; 9.2.17,18; 10.3.2,11; 10.6.10; 11.5.7.

the *māyā* of an Asura can create wondrous forms (*vápus-*).²⁰ When used in the singular, the majority of references denote a deity.²¹ Among those Rig Vedic *asura* gods designated with multiple bodily parts who continue to be similarly described in the AV, Agni and Varuṇa are foremost.

A. Varuṇa

The Atharva Veda maintains the exaltedness attributed to Varuṇa in the RV.²² Varuṇa is the great ruler (AVŚ 4.16.1), the best among the gods (AVŚ 6.21.2). As in the RV, he is the *asura par excellence* (AVŚ 1.10.1; 4.15.12; 5.11.1).²³ He is the son of the goddess Aditi (AVŚ 5.1.9) herself an Asura, whose prominent Vedic characteristics are conception and motherhood.²⁴ But only rarely is Varuṇa a creator of forms (e.g. AVŚ 5.1.8.). Probably his dominant trait in the AV is his sovereignty which extends everywhere (cf. AVŚ 4.16.3, 5). Varuṇa's majestic and all-comprehensive nature is expressed by the god's omniscience, and this trait is represented by a multiplicity of eyes. Since sight often correlates with wisdom,²⁵ a limitless number of eyes symbolizes Varuṇa's infinite knowledge. Thus in the RV, Varuṇa is said to have 'a thousand eyes' (7.34.10 *váruṇa...*

²⁰ AVŚ 6.72 represents a typical magic *sūkta*. The hymn is used by Kauś. 40.16,17 in a rite to make the male organ stout by means of an amulet. An amulet made of the *arka* plant is asked to make the sexual member *samsamaka*—('altogether correspondent' W. D. Whitney, *Atharva-Veda Samhita*, Vol. I [Cambridge, 1905], 335—hereafter cited as Whitney, *AV*) as a black snake which spreads itself making wondrous forms by means of the Asura's *māyā*. For a discussion on the erotic in the AV, see Shende, *Religion*, Chap. II.

²¹ The only example of a demonic Asura (sing.) is in AVŚ 8.6.5.

²² Cf. N. J. Shende, *The Foundations of the Atharvanic Religion*, (Poona, 1949), pp. 280-285. A different view expressed by A. A. Macdonell (*Vedic Mythology* [Strassburg, 1897], pp. 25-26) is too limited.

²³ Interestingly, all these passages are in what is generally regarded as the original AVŚ.

²⁴ These characteristics form the basis for an AV multiplicity reference to her. Aditi is the mother of the Adityas (Macdonell, *Vedic Mylh.* p. 122); the Adityas form part of the Asura class of divine beings (W. Norman Brown, "The Creation Myth of the Rig Veda," *JAOS* 62 [1942], 88). Although the number of Aditi's offspring fluctuate in the Vedas (see A. Hillebrandt, *Vedische Mythologie* II, reprint of 2nd. ed. [Hildesheim, 1965] 87ff.), there are references in the RV (10.72.8), AVŚ (8.9.21) and SB (III. 1.3.2) to the eight sons of Aditi. In consequent, AVŚ 8.9.21c assigns eight wombs (*asṭayoni-*) to the goddess; AVP (16.19) has the variant reading *asṭāu dhāmāni*.

²⁵ Cf. J. Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets* (The Hague, 1963), pp. 81-82.

sahásracaksāḥ), and in the AV his ‘thousand-eyed spies’ (AVŚ 4.16.4) attest to the god’s capacity for total knowledge.²⁶

Other instances of multiplicity as applied to Varuṇa in the AV are not as readily understood. AVŚ 10.10.28²⁷ (AVP 16.109) mentions the three tongues that shine within the mouth of Varuṇa, and of these the one which glistens in the middle is the Cow (*vaśā-*, probably ‘a barren cow’, usually reserved for Brahmins either for their honorarium or for sacrificial offering²⁸). *Vaśā* in this hymn becomes transfigured, upon being offered, into an omnipotent divinity; she becomes the *Urgrund* out of which the universe is shaped.²⁹ The meaning of ‘three tongues’ and the significance of *vaśā-* as the third tongue can only be surmised. Perhaps the ‘tongues’ represent ‘fire’; in RV 3.20.2 Agni’s three tongues probably represent the fires on each of the three fire altars.³⁰ In support of the fire image are the verbs $\sqrt{dī}$ and $\sqrt{rāj}$ (‘to glisten, shine, glitter, reign’³¹) used in AVŚ 10.10.28. However there is difficulty in pursuing this image further as Varuṇa is not closely connected with the fire or the sacrifice in the RV or AV. It is more likely that the ‘three tongues’ somehow emphasize the greatness of Varuṇa. The number ‘three’ signifies ‘totality’ and ‘completeness’;³² perhaps Varuṇa comprises the entire cosmic material of which the Cow forms a third. An analogy between a mouth enclosing a tongue and Varuṇa enclosing the world (usually considered tripartite³³) may

²⁶ The number ‘a thousand’ (*sahasra-*) expresses the notion of ‘limitless, total’ (cf. Jan Gonda, *The Savayajñas*, p. 317). Compounds having *sahasra-* as prior member followed by a term for some bodily part or form construct an expression connoting possession of the total number of parts or forms in question (see Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 152). The expression, in turn, is usually applied metaphorically.

²⁷ *Tisrō jihvā várupasyāntár dīdyaty āsáni / tāsām̄ yá mádhye rājati sā
vaśā duṣpratigráhā //.*

²⁸ On *vaśā* in the RV, see D. Srinivasan, *The Concept of the Cow in the Rig Veda*. Thesis (U. of Pa., 1967) pp. 71-73.

²⁹ Shende, *Foundations*, pp. 402-403.

³⁰ Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 161.

³¹ J. Gonda, (*The Savayajñas in Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen*, afd. Letterkunde, n.s. Vol. 71, no. 2 [1965], 349; and *Zeitschrift für vergl. Sprachf.* 73, 151ff.) assigns *rājati* the meaning ‘to stand forth’.

³² Cf. W. Kirfel, *Symbolik des Hinduismus und des Jainismus* (Stuttgart, 1959), p. 96.

³³ See under Rohita hymns; W. Kirfel, *Die Kosmographie der Inder* (Bonn and Leipzig, 1920), pp. 3-6; J. Gonda, *Loka, World and Heaven in the Veda*, in

also be intended here. Varuṇa's ability to encompass the Cow is reiterated in the same hymn where she is said to have 'entered into the belly of Varuṇa'.³⁴

B. Rudra

Like Varuṇa, Rudra is characterized by omniscience; the god is described with 'a thousand eyes' (*sahasrākṣa-*) more frequently than any other AV deity (AVŚ 11.2.3, 7, 17 = AVP 16.104 and 105 with variants for vs. 7). AVŚ 11.2.17 elaborates on Rudra's infinite knowledge calling him "manifoldly wise" (*bahudhā viपaścīt-*) and "overseeing all" (Bloomfield, *AV* [see fn. 35], 157). Bhava and Śarva, who in the Yajur Veda are absorbed into the godhead Rudra, but who remain separate though closely associated with him in the AV (e.g. AVŚ 11.2.14, 16) are likewise called 'thousand eyed' (AVŚ 4.28.3; epithet omitted in AVP 4.37) undoubtedly to accentuate their affinity to Rudra.³⁵

The power of omniscience, though not attributed to Rudra in the RV, harmonizes well with one facet of this ambivalent Vedic god.³⁶ In the RV, the *asura-power* is an intrinsic part of Rudra's nature (see RV 2.33.9). As such he is considered a High Being, endowed with special vital power and energy (*ugra-*³⁷), and capable of creating multiple outer forms (*pūrūpa-*) which may be considered his phenomenal manifestations (2.33.9; see Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", 164ff). His dominion over the world (of which he is 'the father'

Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, afd. Letterkunde, n.s. 73, no. 1 (1966), 92.

³⁴ AVŚ 10.10.22; on 10.10.28 see Gonda, *Savayajñas*, p. 349 and V. Henry, *Les Livres X, XI et XII de l'Atharva-Veda* (Paris, 1896), pp. 37; 88.

³⁵ The distinction in the AV between Rudra on the one hand and Bhava and Śarva on the other is well summarized by R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiśnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems* (Strassburg, 1913), par. 80. Gonda opines (*Savayajñas*, 362) that Bhava and Śarva are popular divinities. M. Bloomfield (*Hymns of the Atharva-Veda in Sacred Books of the East* 42, repr. [Delhi, 1964], 618—hereafter cited as Bloomfield, *AV*) believes them to be embodiments (*mūrti*) of Rudra and not separate deities. So also Shende (*Foundations*, p. 278) who understands Bhava and Śarva to represent the creator and destroyer aspects of Rudra.

³⁶ Cf. J. Gonda, *Viśnuism and Śivaism* (London, 1970), pp. 1-17.

³⁷ See J. Gonda, *Ancient-Indian ojas, Latin *augos and the Indo-European nouns in -es/-os* (Utrecht, 1952); Gonda, *Savayajñas*, 421.

³⁸ AVŚ 7.87.1 (AVP 20.32 with variants) states that Rudra is in fire, within waters and has entered (*ā Viś*) herbs and plants. The verse thus testifies to the

RV 6.49.10 and ‘master’ *īśāna-* 2.33.9) continues to be expounded in the AV. AVŚ 11.2.10, in addressing Rudra as Ugra (an epithet later applied to Śiva) states: ‘Thine are the four directions, thine is the sky, thine is the earth, O Ugra, thine is this spacious atmosphere. Thine is all this which has spirit (*ātman-*) and which is breathing upon earth.’ As this verse shows, the AV assigns new dimensions to the Rudra image; the majestic side of Rudra becomes intensified (as does the destructive side, illustrated in other verses of this hymn ³⁹). With this increase in grandeur, omniscience may well come to be ascribed to Rudra. It may also be the result of Rudra’s identification with Agni in the AV (e.g. AVŚ 7.87.1). The fusion of Agni-Rudra (important in the steady rise of Rudra) is an Atharvanic innovation. In the RV, omniscience is central to Agni’s nature and this trait causes Agni to have ‘a thousand eyes’ (e.g. 10.79.5; 1.79.12; see Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity,” 158). Perhaps as Agni and Rudra merge in the AV, Agni’s omniscience comes to be attributed to Rudra. It is certainly noteworthy in this connection that in the AV Agni loses the attribute.

C. Indra

As noted above (see fn. 17), the RV describes Indra’s ability to be ‘multi-form’ (*pururūpa*) that is, to have the capacity to create or project multiple phenomenal forms which are the visible manifestations of his transcendental powers. The AV sustains this image. In AVŚ 6.99.1 Indra is called *purūṇāman-* ‘the many-named One.’ *Purūṇāman* is congruent with the concept *pururūpa*. A ‘name’ designates a distinct apprehensible existence which is concretized in ‘a form’; together ‘name and form’ express phenomenal individuality.⁴⁰ A variety of Indra’s forms are mentioned in AVŚ 17.1.13 where each

belief that Rudra’s transcendent power can be revealed in externality by transposing itself (i.e., ‘entering’) into a tangible form. The verb *ā Vvīś* is often used to describe the ‘entering’ of a power into a phenomenal form; the form then constitutes the visible location wherein the power is manifested (i.e., *dhāman*). *Ā Vvīś* is frequently used in this manner to show the transposition of Soma’s power into the form of soma juice (see Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 154). Other examples cited by Gonda (*Savayajñas*, p. 289) are illness entering the human body (AV 1.12.3), *brāhmaṇ* entering into the structure of man (AV 10.2.33), speech in heaven and earth (RV 10.125.6 = AV 4.30.5); see also AV 3.29.7; 5.1.2; 7.82.4; 10.7.35.

³⁹ Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Śaivism*, par. 81.

⁴⁰ See M. Falk, *Nāma-rūpa and dharma-rūpa* (Calcutta, 1943), Chaps. I and II.

one is called a different ‘body’ (*tanū-*⁴¹) of the god. Thus, Indra is said to have a ‘body’ in the waters, and others on earth, within fire, in soma (called ‘the heaven-knowing’ or ‘heaven-winning [*svarvīd-*] purified One’) and in the atmosphere.⁴² Indra’s ability to project phenomenal forms is also implied in AVŚ 17.1.10. In this verse Indra has a dear location (*dhāman-*, i.e. a place, being or phenomenon⁴³) wherein Indra’s transcendental power manifests itself. *Dhāman* not only refers to a phenomenal location wherein the presence of the numinous is experienced, it also refers to the particular way the numen locates or projects a mode of its nature into externality.⁴⁴ Thus Indra, in these AV verses, is portrayed as a divinity capable of projecting different manifest forms which are the visible locations of his numinous powers.⁴⁵

D. Agni

Regarding Agni, the AV continues the multiplicity images of the RV, although the latter provides many more penetrating details. In the

⁴¹ *Tanū* primarily designates the corporeal body of a person (A. B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, Vol. II [Cambridge, Mass., 1925], 486). In AVŚ 17.1.13 *tanū-* connotes a particular manifestation or ‘aspect’ of the divine. So also in AVŚ 9.2.25 the *tanūs* of Kāma seem to be man’s *dhis* (“thoughts”). • *Tanū-* may also denote a body assumed by the deceased upon entering heaven (K. G. Geldner, *Der Rig-Veda* Vol. III [Cambridge, Mass., 1951] ad 10.15.14 d). Cf. L. Renou, *Études Védiques et Pāṇinéennes* IV (Paris, 1958), 20: “*tanū* est souvent . . . ‘corps mystique’”. This series is hereafter cited as *EVP*. R. N. Dandekar (“God in Hindu Thought”, *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Res. Inst.*, Golden Jubilee Vol. [1968], 458) notes that *tanūs* are “appearances in certain specific aspects which latter may be co-existent (this concept having been developed more particularly in Saivism)”.

⁴² Maghavan (a frequent epithet of Indra) is assigned ‘a hundred bodies’ in AVŚ 13.4.44. However, these *tanūs* may belong to Rohita, who in this hymn is identified with many different gods, including Indra (AVŚ 13.4.2). It may be surmised from Keith’s summary of Indra in the Vedas (*Rel. and Phil.*, Chap. 9) that it becomes characteristic for Indra to take on deceptive forms. He assumes different female forms for love of a woman (AVŚ 7.38.2; the Subrahmanyā litany [JB II. 79; SB III. 3.4.18]); or different animal forms including that of a ram (also in the Subrahmanyā litany; see Keith, *ibid.*, p. 133). On Indra’s forms also cf. J. Gonda, *The Meaning of the Sanskrit term Dhāman-* in *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen*, afd. *Letterkunde*, n.s. Vol. 73, no. 2 (1967), 13.

⁴³ See Gonda, *Dhāman-*, 19.

⁴⁴ Gonda, *ibid.*

⁴⁵ On the possible powers comprising Indra’s transcendental nature, see Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 150.

RV, Agni is an Asura possessing *māyā*; this power enables him to emit forms of himself into externality.⁴⁶ The god emits three forms apprehended in each of the three spheres of the Vedic ordered world: in the sky Agni is apprehended as the sun, in the atmosphere as lightning, and on earth as terrestrial fire. These three natural phenomena are considered to be the visible locations of Agni's transcendental 'Fire' power.⁴⁷ As terrestrial fire, Agni is believed to be present in both domestic fires and the three ritual fires situated in each of the Vedic altars. In this way, three bodily parts and forms are characteristically associated with Agni in the RV.

Some of these Rig Vedic notions are reflected in AVŚ 5.27.1. Pāda 1d calls him an Asura, Son of Himself (*tánūnápāt-*) and many-handed (*bhūripāni-*). Agni is *Tanūnapāt* in the sense that the numinous Fire power gives rise to the 'son' which is the phenomenal fire form (*tanū-*).⁴⁸ *Bhūripāni-* (AVP 9.1 reads *viśvavedas-* 'possessed of all knowledge') may connote 'liberality' as does another epithet of Agni, *dravīnodā* ('Giver of Wealth', AVŚ 19.3.2).

The *tanūs* of Agni are several times mentioned in AV verses. The auspicious *tanūs* in AVŚ 18.2.8 are clearly associated with the crematory flames which carry the corpse to a yonder 'place of the pious' (*sukṛtām u lokām*). In AVŚ 19.3.2 Agni is asked to come to the worshipper with all his *tanūs*.

Agni's triple forms continue to be alluded to. In AVŚ 18.4.11, he is "triply-disposed" (*tredhā* Whitney, *AV* II, 874), and it is likely that the 'three-named One' (i.e. the One having three forms) in AVŚ 6.74.3 is Agni.⁴⁹ AVŚ 13.3.21 speaks of Agni's triple birthplace; here Agni is probably identified with Rohita, the supreme god of all the hymns in Book 13.⁵⁰ AVŚ 13.1.12 presents a similar case. Verse

⁴⁶ Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", 157-162.

⁴⁷ For details on Agni's complex transcendental nature, see Srinivasan, *ibid.*

⁴⁸ So also J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens* I (Stuttgart, 1960), 72; Cf. Keith, *Rel. and Phil.* I, 166.

⁴⁹ So also Whitney (*AV* I, 337 who cites this as the only occurrence of *trināman-*) and Bloomfield (*AV*, 135). Sāyana understands the threefold fire of the earth, atmosphere and sky, or the threefold fire of the sacrifice. Cf. RV 3.20.3 where Agni is said to have 'many names'.

⁵⁰ For a discussion on Rohita in Bk. 13, see below. The triple births of the gods (*deva-*) mentioned in verse 21 recall the traditional Vedic classification of deities as terrestrial, atmospheric and celestial (see Macdonell, *Vedic Myth.* p. 19).

12, addressed to ‘the thousandhorned bull, Jātavedas’, certainly appears to invoke Agni. Jātavedas (lit. ‘knowing all created beings’) is an epithet closely associated with Agni in the RV and AV; also Agni is ‘a bull with a thousand horns’ in RV 5.1.8 and possibly RV 7.55.7 (= AVŚ 4.5.1⁵¹). However, the hymn extols Rohita’s superiority over many gods including Agni (see vs. 25; cf. AVŚ 13.3.13). Probably vs. 12 assumes an identity between Agni and Rohita who has absorbed the epithets and powers of the former.⁵²

Terrestrial fire accounts for additional multiplicity imagery. As the flaming fire extends on all sides, so Agni, praised as the earthly fire, is said to be facing in every direction (*viśvatomukha*; AVŚ 4.33.6a = RV 1.97.6a).⁵³ The sacrificial flames receiving the ritual offering are spoken of as ‘the seven mouths’ of Agni.⁵⁴ The number ‘seven’ has sacerdotal associations;⁵⁵ for example, there are seven officiating priests. The ritualistic connotation of ‘seven’ probably accounts for the symbolism in AVŚ 4.39.10. This symbolism is carried further in that the flames are also conceived as Agni’s multiple tongues (cf. AVŚ 6.76.1, in AVP 19.15). Already in the RV, Agni’s ‘flame’ is metaphorically referred to as his ‘tongue’ (cf. RV 2.1.13) and his three tongues in RV 3.20.2 probably represent the fires in the three altars.

E. Śyena

The heavenly eagle (*śyena*), deity of AVŚ 7.41 is a symbol of the sun.⁵⁶ Verse 2 (occurring in AVP 20.9 with some variants) describes the bird as ‘a thousand-footed’ (*sahasrapād-*) and ‘hundred-wombed’ (*śatayoni-*). *Sahasrapād-* occurs as an epithet of Sūrya in RV 8.69.16

⁵¹ Inasmuch as ‘horns’ are the metaphorical equivalent of ‘flames’ (Nighantu 1.17), the multiplicity image attributes ‘limitless fire power’ to Agni in the Rig Vedic verses and to Agni/Rohita in AVŚ 13.1.12.

⁵² Renou (*EVP* II, 86) and Bloomfield (*AV* ad 13.1) recognize the close association between Agni and Rohita, but they vacillate in advocating the identification of Agni with Rohita.

⁵³ Cf. Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 162. Said also of Sūrya in AVŚ 19.27.7, and Skambha-*brāhmaṇ* in AVŚ 10.8.27.

⁵⁴ AVŚ 4.39.10 cd: *saptāsyāni tāva jātavedas tébhyo juhomi sá jusasva havyám* / “Seven mouths are thine, O Jātavedas; to them I make offering—do thou enjoy the oblation” (Whitney, *AV* I, p. 217).

⁵⁵ Cf. Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 163–164; for other connotations of ‘seven’ in the Vedas, see Gonda, *Savayajñas*, p. 139.

⁵⁶ Shende, *Foundations*, p. 385; Whitney, *AV* I, p. 415.

and metaphorically refers to the limitless rays of the solar god;⁵⁷ this meaning is appropriate in the AV context as well. *Śatayoni-* occurs twice in the AV (7.41.2b; 19.46.6b) each time followed by the term *vayodhā-* ‘bestowing vigor’. It is likely therefore that being ‘a hundred-wombed’ connotes the limitless capacity for imparting life which is allied to conferment of vigor.⁵⁸ In sum, the eagle as depicted in AVS 7.41.2b symbolizes the unlimited radiant power of the sun which has a limitless capacity for creation and can bestow vigor.

Cosmic parturition, the theory responsible for the divine multiplicity imagery in the RV, continues as a creation theory in the AV. Indeed the AV gives clear demonstration of the analogy between human and cosmic conception. AVS 14.2 is a hymn describing nuptial ceremonies. Verse 32 is used in Kauśika sūtra 79.6⁵⁹ when a bride enters the nuptial bed; the verse appears to be a blessing upon the bride for abundant offspring. She is described in 32cd as being ‘all-formed (*viśvarūpa-*) with greatness, rich in future offspring’ and instructed to unite with her husband to produce the desired progeny. Evidently the female is *viśvarūpa-* because the forms of future offspring are thought to be within her. An explanation of how the forms get inside the female’s womb is given in verse 5 of AVS 5.25, a hymn for successful conception;⁶⁰ here it is indicated that the great Fashioner or

⁵⁷ On *pād* as ‘foot’ and ‘ray’ of the sun, see Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity,” 162–163. M. Bloomfield (“The Legend of Soma and the Eagle”, JAOS 16 [1894], 12–13) considers the ‘eagle’ as ‘lightning-fire’, observing that *nṛcaksāḥ* in v. 2 points directly to Agni, and *śivah* (in v. 1) may also show Agni on the way to assimilation with Rudra-Śiva. However, Agni is also solar fire. Further, the epithet *sahasrapād-* occurs neither in the RV or the AV in connection with Agni in his lightning form. Sāyaṇa on *sahasrapād-* in AV 7.41.2: a thousand rays.

⁵⁸ Sāyaṇa on *śatayonih* in AV 7.41.2: *śatasya aparimitasya kāryasya kāranabhūtah aparimitaphalasya miśrayitā vā*. Note that Sāyaṇa assumes, quite rightly, that *śata* in this compound does not indicate a numerical concept, but rather attributes the notion of ‘boundlessness’ to the noun. Thus *śata-* has the same connotations as *sahasra-* when used in conjunction with a multiple bodily part or form.

⁵⁹ The Kauśika-Sūtra, the most valuable accessory text of the AV, joins the AVS recension and deals with material usually considered in the Gṛhya-Sūtras. The Kauś. S. is frequently an excellent indicator of the ritual application of Śaunakiya verses as *mantras* and rites are closely correlated (Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, p. 278).

⁶⁰ Kauś. S. 35.5 quotes the hymn in a ceremony for conception of a male (*pumsavāna*).

Carpenter, Tvaṣṭṛ, fashions ($\sqrt{piś}$, also ‘to hew out,’ or ‘to carve’) the forms (*rūpa-*) within the womb. Tvaṣṭṛ, one of the oldest demiurges in the Rig Veda, is eminently suited for this extraordinary deed since on a cosmic level he engages in similar activity: ⁶¹ he fashions ($\sqrt{piś}$ AVŚ 5.12.9) with forms heaven and earth and all beings (*bhuwanāni viśvā*). ⁶² AVŚ 18.1.5 elaborates further saying that Tvaṣṭṛ is himself *viśvarūpa-*, and that he, the vivifier, contains in his own womb male and female forms. ⁶³ The implication, of course, is that these forms are emitted into externality by the god. AVŚ 6.78 (occurring in AVP 19.16), a hymn employed by Kauś. S. (78.10, 14) in marriage ceremonies also emphasizes Tvaṣṭṛ’s ability to emit forms. Verse 3 says that Tvaṣṭṛ ‘generated’ (\sqrt{jan}) the wife as well as the man destined to be her husband. These notions on cosmic creation relate closely to those on human conception. On the cosmic plane, Tvaṣṭṛ is *viśvarūpa-* because his womb contains all potential phenomenal forms; on the human plane, the bride is called *viśvarūpa-* for essentially the same reason. Cosmogony is therefore viewed as an intensification of human parturition; this view the AV inherits from the RV.

AVŚ 9.4 (AVP 16.24-26 ⁶⁴) gives further evidence that the AV is familiar with the notion of cosmic parturition caused by an omniform creator. The hymn refers to a Cosmic Bull who is there in the beginning

⁶¹ Note that Tvaṣṭṛ is, in the RV, an *asura* who possesses *māyā*. Cf. RV 10.53.9.

⁶² The etymological meaning of *bhuvana-* appears to be “the place of becoming”, an idea which may include that of ‘place (or persons) in which becoming (prospering, growing, being, existing) takes place or has taken place” (J. Gonda, “*Bhuvana-*”, *Vishweshvaranand Indological Journal*, Vol. 5, [1967], 47.). *Viśva-* frequently combines with *bhuvana-*; it serves as “the adjective for analytical and enumerative totality” according to Gonda (ibid., p. 49). Thus *bhuwanāni viśvā* refers to all living creatures in the world. On Tvaṣṭṛ’s creativity cf. Hillebrandt, *Vedische Mythologie* II, 381; Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 143ff. AVŚ 5.12.9 is RV 10.110.9.

⁶³ 5ab: *gárbhe nū nau janitā dámpati kar devás tvásṭā sávitā viśvárūpah*. AV 18.1.5 = RV 10.10.5. RV 10.10 is a dialogue between the primeval twins Yama and Yamī. In verse 5, Yama states: ‘Already in the womb the creator made us husband and wife, god Tvaṣṭṛ, the vivifier, the omniform’. See H. Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization* (Washington, D.C. 1946) pp. 127; 137-148 for the male and female as symbols in Hindu art which represent phenomenal reality composed of opposite yet complementary forces.

⁶⁴ On verse order see Whitney, *AV* II p. 529 ad AV 9.4. See Gonda, *Savayajñas*, Kauś. S. 66, 18 for a translation (p. 99ff.) and copious exegesis (p. 311ff.) on the hymn.

(vs. 2). Then only he and the Waters existed, or as pāda 2a says, in referring to the primeval Bull: ‘He... in the beginning became the counterpart (*pratimā*) of the Waters’. These Waters are the fertilizing Cosmic Waters, and in being their ‘counterpart’ the Bull is likewise established as a primordial fertilizing force. In this capacity he is *viśvarūpa-* (vs. 22⁶⁵). The significance of the epithet is reaffirmed in the first verse of this hymn where the Bull is described as an ‘impetuous⁶⁶ Bull, full of milk and bearing all forms in his bellies’ (pl.).⁶⁷ Thus the Cosmic Bull, much like Tvaṣṭṛ, carries all forms of phenomenal reality in his several bellies (*vakṣánā-*) which may be likened to female breasts or wombs.⁶⁸ But several seemingly contradictory features are here ascribed to the Cosmic Bull: in being both impetuous and possessed of milk and womb-like bellies, he is associated with both masculine and feminine attributes. Verse 3ab continues the bi-sexual imagery: ‘a male [yet] pregnant, strong,⁶⁹ rich in milk, the Bull carries a vessel of wealth’.⁷⁰ Evidently, the Cosmic Bull is conceived to be an androgynous being, carrying in his wombs all phenomenal forms which the poet calls his ‘vessel of wealth’. The aim is to define a primordial self-seminating force empowered to conceive forms.⁷¹

The Cosmic Bull, pregnant with phenomenality is offered by the

⁶⁵ An actual sacrificial bull, subject of the entire hymn, is identified in vs. 22 with the Cosmic Bull who is ‘of tawny form, of the atmosphere [is this his divine station? On *nabhasa-* Gonda (*The Savayajñas*, p. 322): “of the nature of clouds”], possessing energy, the virile strength of Indra, omniform...’. Although one term (*rṣabhá-*) is used throughout AVŚ 9.4 to designate this bull, the animal is seen from three different aspects; these are ritually and esoterically connected within the hymn. In verses 9, 18, 19 the bull appears to be the animal presented as a gift to the Brahman[s]; however, ‘the bull’ as sacrificial victim is never far from view (cf. vss. 1d. [see Renou, *EVP* II, 94]; 6cd [see Gonda, *Savayajñas*, p. 314 ad vs. 6]; 10). In addition, the animal is mystically conceived as a divine being of extraordinary power (cf. 9.4.7). Most important in this connection, the sacrificial bull is identified with the primeval Cosmic Bull.

⁶⁶ For *tvesa-* cf. J. Gonda, *Epithets in the R̄gveda* ('s-Gravenhage, 1959), pp. 73 and 160.

⁶⁷ lab: *sāhasrás tvesá rṣabháh páyavān viśvā rūpāṇi vakṣánāsu bibhrat*.

⁶⁸ On *vakṣánā*, cf. RV 1.92.4b: Uṣas displays her breast (*vákṣas-*) as a cow her udder; RV 10.27.16: the mother carries the embryo in her sides (*vakṣánā-*).

⁶⁹ *sthávirah-* also ‘big, compact’.

⁷⁰ *pūmān antárvānt sthávirah páyavān vásoh kábandham rṣabhó bibharti*.

⁷¹ Cf. vs. 6 where the actual bull, identified with the Cosmic Bull, is called ‘shaper of forms, generator of cattle’. These allusions suit perfectly the bull’s role in the *vṛṣotsarga* (see fn. 74) and the Cosmic Bull’s procreative function.

gods in the first sacrifice.⁷² Then, all the gods came together and divided the Bull into portions (see vs. 15).⁷³ When they thus prepared the Bull, each god received a share (i.e. a limb or part) of the sacrificial animal (vss. 12-16). The outcome of the primordial sacrifice, though this must be deduced, is the creation of the world. The hymn nowhere indicates the outcome; perhaps that theme was considered tangential to the major ritual applications of the AV text.⁷⁴ However, this interpretation seems assured because of the close correlation between the AV Cosmic Bull and a mythic Bull in the RV who is instrumental in fostering creation.

The RV knows of an Asura Bull who also bears the name *viśvarūpa-* (RV 3.38.4). This Bull too is androgynous; RV 3.38.7 calls him a Bull-Cow, and in RV 3.56.3 he is said to have three bellies (*tripājasyá-*) and three udders. Clearly the AV Cosmic Bull is drawn along lines very similar to the RV Asura Bull.⁷⁵ Indeed the AV is familiar with the Rig Vedic Bull; RV 3.38.4 is repeated in AVŚ 4.8.3 (with one minor variant).⁷⁶ In the RV, gods also act upon the Asura Bull. These gods, possessing *māyā* (i.e. *māyin-*) bring out (*ni √mā* lit. ‘measure out’) from the Asura Bull the multiformal phenomenal world.⁷⁷ Though the Asura Bull remains passive during the actual emission of phenomenal forms, he symbolizes the primeval raw material out of which the world is shaped.⁷⁸ This symbolism should also adhere to the AV Cosmic Bull. Since both samhitās are acquainted with a similar omniform, androgynous primordial Bull, the activities attributed to him in the RV probably continue to be valid in the AV.

⁷² See also Renou, *EVP* II, 94.

⁷³ Gonda's translation of *vyákalpayan* is followed here (*Savayajñas* pp. 100 and 320).

⁷⁴ The entire text is recited in Kauś. S. 66, 18 in connection with a bullsava. AVŚ 9.4 is also quoted in Kauś. S. 24, 19 in a ceremony (*vṛṣotsarga*) for turning loose among the cows a stud bull. Kauś. S. 19, 1 includes the hymn among charms to secure prosperity and gain fecundity of cows. Kauś. S. 24, 23 advises the use of this hymn while offering a white bull to Indra if a man wishes to achieve a successful undertaking.

⁷⁵ For further comparisons see Gonda, *Savayajñas*, p. 323 ad St. 22.

⁷⁶ In the typical AV fashion of using mythic themes for practical purposes, this verse, which in the RV extols the greatness of a primordial creator, is used to extol a king in the *rājasūya* ceremony in Kauś. 17.1ff. and Vāit. 36.7.

⁷⁷ See Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 147-148. Cf. J. Gonda, *Four Studies*, p. 142.

⁷⁸ Srinivasan, *ibid.*

One concluding observation. In the Rig Veda, the Asura Bull represents a more ancient image of primeval matter; Puruṣa, the Cosmic Male of RV 10.90, represents the younger version which retains certain essential features found in the older.⁷⁹ It is thus particularly interesting to observe with Renou⁸⁰ that the AV Cosmic Bull, in being ‘dismembered’ (cf. AVŚ 9.4 12-16) as well as ‘assembled’⁸¹ (9.4.8) is reminiscent of Puruṣa in the Puruṣasūkta.

III

The next set of AV hymns is also concerned with an omniform creator who ‘gives birth’ to the cosmos. However AV 10.7 and 8 (dedicated to Skambha) and AV 13.1-4 (dedicated to Rohita) go beyond demonstrating continuity with Rig Vedic notions on cosmogony and divine multiplicity. These hymns incorporate the multiplicity image in speculative developments which anticipate Upaniṣadic thought.

Skambha (lit. ‘prop, support, pillar’) is the fulcrum at the center of the universe. As such, Skambha symbolizes the axis mundi, the pillar which links as well as supports heaven and earth (cf. 10.7.35; 10.8.2). Skambha also maintains the atmosphere and the six directions; indeed the pillar has entered the whole of creation (*bhūvana-*;⁸² cf. 10.7.35). Praised thus in AV 10.7 and 8,⁸³ Skambha epitomizes a new series of figurative concepts which express more abstractly than do Rig Vedic demiurges the supreme power originating and sustaining the cosmos.⁸⁴ AV 10.7.22 summarizes well Skambha’s

⁷⁹ Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 171-172.

⁸⁰ Renou, *EVP* II, 94.

⁸¹ *sāmbhṛta-*, cf. Gonda, *Savayajñas*, pp. 315-316.

⁸² See Gonda, “*Bhūvana-*”, 49. On AV 10.7.35d, see fn. 112.

⁸³ It should be noted that while AV 10.8 agrees in some areas with 10.7 (e.g., number of verses, word usage, homage to Skambha in the first two verses), the main theme of this hymn is the nature of *brāhmaṇ* behind phenomenal diversity (L. Renou, *EVP* II, 84; Renou, *Hymnes spéculatifs du Véda* [Paris, 1956], p. 263ff.). The AV scholar N. J. Shende (*Rel. and Phil. of AV*, p. 210), in summarizing the meaning of *brāhmaṇ* in the AV, states that on the whole “the word stands for the magical act or the mysterious power which arises out of that act in the priest and which pervades man and the universe”.

⁸⁴ Some other typical AV First Principles are: Kāla (Time) 19.53, 54 (in 19.53.1. Kāla is ‘thousand-eyed’, i.e., ‘omniscient’); Prāṇa (Vital Breath) 11.4; Kāma (Desire) 9.2; Rohita (The Ruddy One) 13.1-4; Brahmacārin (the chaste Vedic student) 11.5; Ucchiṣṭa (the remnant of the sacrificial food) 11.7; also Puruṣa (19.6) and Virāj (8.9, 10).

comprehensive power; the verse implies that the totality of existence (all divinity, all time, all space) is within the cosmic pillar.⁸⁵ These mystic beliefs prefigure Upaniṣadic themes, as do Skambha's identification with *brāhmaṇ*⁸³ (10.7.17; ⁸⁶ 32-34; ⁸⁶ 36) and *ātmāṇ* (10.8.44).⁸⁷ The speculative thrust of these hymns may well have been their primary intent; with verses often resembling the *brahmodya* style,⁸⁸ hymns 10.7 and 8 scarcely served any ritual use whatsoever.⁸⁹

For all its abstract tendencies, Skambha still retains traces of anthropomorphism. In being described with two hands, two feet, a voice, ear and eye (10.7.39), a head (10.7.18), mouth (10.7.19, 33) tongue (10.7.19) and veins (10.7.16) etc., Skambha assuredly has the traits of a person viewed as the chief stabilizing force of the cosmos.⁹⁰

Skambha is also the generative force; the hymns make quite clear that all of existence has been emitted from the body of Skambha. AV 10.7 begins with a set of riddles, each one asking *in which* of Skambha's limbs a particular element of the world resides (e.g. vss. 1, 3, 13), or *from which* limb arose a particular aspect of phenomenality (vss. 2, 20). The answer to these questions shows that Skambha, within whose body all elements were set prior to creation, represents the primeval raw material which formed the world. To isolate one such sequence from the hymn:

vs. 2 From which limb of his does fire blaze?
 From which limb does Mātariśvan (the wind) blow?
 From which limb does the moon measure out?
 Measuring out a limb of the great Skambha?

⁸⁵ See Gonda, *Loka*, p. 58.

⁸⁶ Cf. Renou, *EVP* II, 83; Paul Deussen, *Geschichte der Philosophie* I, 1 (Leipzig, 1920), 312. Note Whitney's exegesis ad 10.7.32 (*AV* II, p. 593).

⁸⁷ Deussen, *Geschichte* I, 1, 334: "die erste und älteste Stelle, die wir kennen, in der rückhaltlos der *Ātman* als Weltprinzip proklamiert wird...". The identification is well brought out in the translation of M. Lindenau, "Die Skambha-Hymnen des Atharvaveda", *Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik* III (Leipzig, 1925), 235ff.

⁸⁸ See Bloomfield, *The Atharvaveda* (1899), 88-89 for AV *brahmodya* hymns; cf. Renou, *EVP* II, 79-80.

⁸⁹ Kauś. S. does not notice either hymn; 10.8.42 is used in the Vaitāna Sūtra.

⁹⁰ According to Renou (*Hymnes spéculatifs*, p. 261) the notion of a cosmic pillar (Skambha) dates from the ancient Rig Vedic hymns describing how in the beginning heaven and earth were separated and stabilized by a creator god.

- vs. 3 In which limb of his does the earth abide?
 In which limb does the atmosphere abide?
 In which limb abides the sky, put in place?
 In which limb does the higher heaven abide?
- vs. 12 In whom the earth, the atmosphere, in whom the sky is set.
 Where fire, moon, sun, wind stand fixed
 Declare that Skambha: just who indeed is he?
- vs. 32 Of whom the earth is the measure, and the atmosphere his belly
 Who made the sky from his head—to that best bráhman,
 adoration!
- vs. 33 Whose eye is the sun and the moon, forever new ⁹¹
 Who made the fire from his mouth—to that best bráhman,
 adoration!
- vs. 34 Whose breathing in and breathing out is the wind; whose eye became the Añgirases
 Who made the cardinal points from his wisdom—to that best bráhman, adoration!

Thus in the manner of the ancient Cosmic Bull and Tvaṣṭṛ, Skambha is a cosmic power containing within itself the diversity of phenomenal reality. AV 10.8.2cd says this well: “In Skambha [dwells] this whole universe, possessed of self (*ātmanvat*)—What breathes and blinks the eye.”⁹² And like those ancient powers, Skambha is also called *viśvarūpa-*. The epithet occurs in 10.7.8; the context of that verse indicates that phenomenality resulted when it was emitted ($\sqrt{sṛj}$) from Viśvarūpa by an agent, Prajāpati.⁹³ The verb $\sqrt{sṛj}$ is significant; it emphasizes that creation occurred by the process of emission.⁹⁴ In that Skambha is portrayed as a passive creative power,

⁹¹ V. Henry (*Les Livres X...XII*, p. 26) translates pādas ab: “Celui dont l’œil est le Soleil / et [l’autre œil] la Lune aux constantes renaissances...”. On this verse cf. Lindenau, “Skambha-Hymnen”, 250.

⁹² R. C. Zaehner, *Hindu Scriptures* (London, New York, 1966), p. 23.

⁹³ The idea is not, as Gonda (*Savayajñas*, p. 332) and Henry (*Les Livres X...*, p. 23) would have it, that the creation is called ‘omniform’.

⁹⁴ Narendra N. Bhattacharyya (*History of Indian Cosmogonical Ideas* [New Delhi, 1971], p. 4) observes that in Vedic literature the creative process may be conceived “as a procreative process, and in this connection we frequently

activated into cosmic parturition when an agent initiates the process, there appears to be an additional similarity among Skambha, the Cosmic Bull, and Puruṣa.⁹⁵ The similarity is further strengthened by allusions to the sacrificial dismemberment of Skambha throughout AV 10.7. As Renou points out,⁹⁶ the entire series of questions which seek to associate different limbs of Skambha with different cosmic phenomena bespeak of the dismemberment of a sacrificial victim. Specifically, compare the following Skambha and Puruṣa vss: AV 10.7.20 with RV 10.90.9; AV 10.7.33, 34 with RV 10.90.13.⁹⁷

Whereas Skambha has the characteristics of a passive creative force, Prajāpati seems to represent the activator. Verse 7 of 10.7, wherein the pillar imagery of Skambha dominates, remarks well on the interaction between active creator and inactive primeval matter; the verse indicates that Prajāpati maintained all the worlds after having propped them upon Skambha.

Prajāpati, who is to become the major demiurge of the entire Brāhmaṇa period,⁹⁸ appears already in the late Rig Vedic hymns as a protector and creator of living things. The term *prajāpati*- 'Lord of Creatures,' occurs four times in Book 10 as the name of a distinct deity. Indeed RV 10.121 is a celebration of the generative powers of Prajāpati, who is thought to come into being as a golden germ (*hiranyagarbha*⁹⁹). The AV continues to elaborate on Prajāpati's creative force. AV 7.19.1 says that he generates (\veejan) creatures, and AV 7.80.3 (= RV 10.121.10 with variants) names the god as

come across such terms as *jan*, *sṛj*, *garbha*, *retas*, etc.". For example, note the root \veejan in AV 10.8.7c and 13c; AV 7.19.1; AV 7.80.3.

⁹⁵ See Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", 172, for Puruṣa as the omniform raw material from which others generate phenomenal forms.

⁹⁶ *EVP* II, 82.

⁹⁷ For Renou ("Etudes Vediques", p. 46) Skambha is a basic symbol of Purusa; he cites other vss. of comparison. The sacrificial theme is also evidenced in AV 10.7, by the use of ritualistic terms in verse 36a; it is stated that Skambha was born from *śrama*- (the toil of ritual austerity) and *tapas*- (devotional heat from ritual activity; cf. C. J. Blair, *Heat in the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda* (New Haven, 1961), pp. 9; 70; 78.

⁹⁸ For references to Prajāpati in cosmogonic myths see Keith, *Rel. and Philo.* I, 207; N. N. Bhattacharyya, "Hist. of Indian Cosmogonical Ideas", p. 25; J. R. Joshi, "Prajāpati in Vedic mythology and ritual", *Bhandarkar Oriental Res. Institute, Annals*, 53. Pts. 1-4 (1972), 101-125.

⁹⁹ See F. D. K. Bosch, *The Golden Germ* ('s-Gravenhage, 1960), Chap. II for texts discussing this concept.

the one who gave birth (*✓jan*) to all forms (*viśvā rūpāni*; RV 10.121.10: *viśvā jātāni*) he enclosed. It is thus entirely in keeping with Prajāpati's function that he is, in the Skambha hymns, the agent who unfolds primeval matter.

Prajāpati however did not create himself. Skambha did. And as AV 10.7.28 intimates, it is erroneous to think otherwise: 'Men [think they] know the Golden Germ (*hiranyagarbha*) as the unutterable supreme; [But it is] Skambha who in the beginning emitted it, the gold within the world'.¹⁰⁰ That is, Skambha emitted Prajāpati, who until the time of 'birth' was nurtured in his womb (cf. AV 10.8.13a). Clearly the imagery of cosmic parturition continues to be closely adhered to. It is equally clear that this symbolism conveys a new speculative position. The position understands the personal creator to be the first produced of primordial matter but not the supreme creative force. This role is reserved for primordial matter. Thus mythically, it is *viśvarūpa*, the source and sustaining force of all diverse life on earth (cf. AV 10.8.11¹⁰¹). Skambha is second to none.¹⁰² Indeed the progenitor, Prajāpati, is but a fraction of the cosmic mass. AV 10.7.26 says it mythically yet succinctly: 'When Skambha, generating, evolved the Ancient One¹⁰³ then men knew by analogy¹⁰⁴ the one limb of Skambha to be the Ancient One'.¹⁰⁵

From the foregoing it is evident that Skambha is both an active and a passive procreative force. Skambha is the first creator who gives birth to the second, who in turn takes over the creation process. This way of conceptualizing the supreme creative force is not found in the RV. It is a schema to develop importantly in the Upaniṣads,¹⁰⁶ the

¹⁰⁰ The translation follows the emphasis Zaehner (*Hindu Scriptures*, p. 21) has given this verse.

¹⁰¹ 10.8.11: What stirs, flies, and what stands
What came into being breathing,
not breathing, winking
That, Viśvarūpa, sustained
the earth
That, combining becomes just One.

¹⁰² Deussen, *Geschichte I*, 1, 312 has already noted that the Skambha hymns postulate a principle superior to Prajāpati which supports the whole cosmos.

¹⁰³ *Purāna*- cf. Renou, *Hymnes spéculatifs*, p. 262, fn. 19.

¹⁰⁴ The translation of *anusamviduh* follows Zaehner (*Hindu Scriptures*, p. 21).

¹⁰⁵ On the superiority of Skambha over Prajāpati, see also 10.7.40.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. N. N. Bhattacharyya, *History of Indian Cosmogonical Ideas*, p. 47.

Mahābhārata¹⁰⁷ and the Purāṇas.¹⁰⁸ It is the ancestor of the well-known Vaiṣṇavite cosmogonic image of the demiurge Brahmā arising from out of the navel¹⁰⁹ of Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu-Anantaśayana). New also is the epistemological emphasis. The RV hesitatingly explores the possibility of knowing the Supreme.¹¹⁰ But aside from the seminal Puruṣasūkta, Rig Vedic speculative hymns express a desire to know more about how the world was created than the essential nature of who created it. In some of the AV speculative hymns however, there is a preoccupation with this question. AV 10.7 and 8 fall into this category; knowledge of the underlying power of the universe, be it Skambha (10.7) or *brāhmaṇ* (10.8, see fn. 83) is the real theme of these hymns. For example, sixteen verses of 10.7 end in the repeated inquiry into the essential nature of Skambha.¹¹¹ An answer to this question, or rather a way to obtain an answer, is suggested within the hymn; it can be discerned from the following pattern of thoughts found throughout the text: It is repeatedly affirmed, as a logical consequent of being *viśvarūpa*, that everything, all worlds, are within Skambha (e.g. AV 10.7.22; 29a; 10.8.2c). The corollary, namely that all material forms partake of the same original source, may be found in 10.7.35d: 'Skambha has entered this whole creation'.¹¹² The precise correspon-

¹⁰⁷ Cf. XII. 231-233 wherein creation of the universe is described in two stages. First Brahman creates the physical and psychical elements (intellect, mind) and then the five elements of ether, earth, water, fire, air. As these cannot further the process of creation they continue to form the first organic body—Prajāpati. Prajāpati, the personal creator then brings forth all living things.

¹⁰⁸ E.g. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, transl. by H. H. Wilson (London, 1840), Book I, Chap. II.

¹⁰⁹ The navel represents the center as the place of generation. Already in the AV, the middle is the place of the procreative source; Skambha as *yaksā* is situated in the middle of the universe (AV 10.7.38; 10.8.15). See J. Gonda, *Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism* (Utrecht, 1954), Chap. XI on Viṣṇu's navel.

¹¹⁰ Cf. W. Norman Brown, "Theories", 25.

¹¹¹ *skambhām tām brūhi kathamāḥ svid evā sāḥ.*

¹¹² *skambhā idāṁ viśvam bhīvanam ā viveśā.* On the significance of *ā* √*viś* see fn. 38. The above translation tallies with that of Zaehner (*Hindu Scriptures*, p. 22), A. Ludwig (*Der Rigveda III*, 402), Lindenau, "Skambha-Hymnen", 239, and V. Henry (*Les Livres X...*, p. 26). However, following the padapāṭha reading *skambhe*, Whitney (AV II, p. 594), Renou (*Hymnes spéculatifs*, p. 162) and Gonda ("Bhuvana-", 49) render this line as: into Skambha has entered this whole creation. Because of the connotations of *ā* √*viś*, I consider the chief significance of the line to be that Skambha is manifest in all phenomenality because all has emanated from his being. Note other examples where Skambha 'enters' (*pra* √*viś* 10.7.8, 9; cf. 10.8.28) into externality.

dence between outer forms and original source (i.e. which phenomenon corresponds to which 'limb' of Skambha) is however a mystery. Those verses seeking to identify a particular outer form with a specific 'limb' of Skambha really aim to 'reconstruct' Skambha, as it were, in an effort to penetrate that mystery. Simultaneously it is acknowledged that the totality of Skambha cannot be fathomed by a method seeking correspondences. Were every form traced back to a 'limb' of Skambha, his complete structure would still elude comprehension because Skambha is greater than the sum of the forms he gave rise to. 'What [is] the highest, the lowest, and what [is] the middle¹¹³ that Prajāpati emitted from Viśvarūpa? By how much did Skambha enter therein? What he did not enter, how much was that?' So asks 10.7.8. The same idea is expressed in 10.8.13 which says that with half [of Skambha?] Prajāpati generated all creation. But, the verse concludes, what of his other half, what is the sign of that?¹¹⁴ In this way it is implied that empiric knowledge can never attain complete knowledge of the original source. Instead, it is implied in 10.7.17, a graduated series of intuitive analogies build up to the knowledge of Skambha: 'They who know brāhmaṇ in man know Parameṣṭhin (the highest one); who knows Parameṣṭhin and who knows Prajāpati, they who know the chief brāhmaṇ-power, they know Skambha on that account (*anusamviduh*; cf. 10.7.26). Although the import of the verse is obscure¹¹⁵, it is nevertheless apparent that a non-empirical mode of inquiry into the nature of the supreme is being attempted.

IV

The Rohita hymns show the multiplicity concept as implicit in Vedic notions on cosmogony, cosmography and the origin of living things. The creative force originating the cosmos and all life is Rohita, symbolic of 'the red' (ascending) sun.¹¹⁶ The term *rohita* already

¹¹³ The three positions most likely refer to the sky, earth and atmosphere respectively.

¹¹⁴ The same question is asked in 10.8.7cd; cf. AV 11.4.22cd.

¹¹⁵ The critical word, *anusamviduh*, does not occur in any other Saṃhitās, Brāhmaṇas or Upaniṣads according to the *Vedic Word-Concordance* ed. Viśva-Bandhu Śāstri, publ. by V. V. R. Inst. (Hosiapur, 1935-). Cf. Deussen, *Geschichte*, 312.

¹¹⁶ The epithet *rohita-*, signifying 'the ruddy one' can also play punningly with derivatives and forms of the root *Vruh* 'to ascend, to mount'.

appears in the RV; it is used exclusively there as an attribute designating the color of horses; nowhere is it applied directly to the sun. Thus Rohita appears to be an independent invention of the poets of the AV to advance their inquiries into the nature of supreme power.¹¹⁷

Of the four Rohita hymns in AVŚ Book 13,¹¹⁸ this theme is best developed in the initial hymn. The opening verse of 13.1 declares Rohita to be the supreme creator of the universe in that ‘he gave birth (\sqrt{jan})¹¹⁹ to all this.’¹²⁰ The allusion to cosmic parturition is sustained in pāda 6a which says that Rohita gave birth (\sqrt{jan}) to heaven and earth. AV 13.2.26d also specifies that Rohita generates (\sqrt{jan}) these two spheres.¹²¹ In this way Rohita continues to create and stabilize the universe. ‘Rohita stabilized heaven and earth,¹²² by

¹¹⁷ In the context of the present discussion, it is not relevant to dwell on another function of Rohita in these hymns, namely as patron of royal power. M. Bloomfield has pointed out the resemblance between images of royal power (especially the *rājasūya*) and solar images occurring in AV 13.1 (“Contributions to the Interpretation of the Veda”, *AJP* 12 [1891] 429-443). F. Edgerton, “Atharva-Veda 13.1.10”, *Indological Studies in Honor of W. Norman Brown*, in *AOS* 47 (New Haven, 1962), p. 56, takes hymn 13.1 to be, among other things, a charm for a king. Cf. also Renou (*Hymnes spéculatifs*, p. 270) on examples of how this double theme runs through 13.1. Actually Renou believes that 13.1 portrays the main deity as Sun-King-*brāhmaṇa* (*EVP* II, 89).

¹¹⁸ Note that AVP has only two Rohita hymns in Book XVIII, and isolated verses in AVP Books 4 and 20; see Whitney *AV* II ad 13.1-3.

¹¹⁹ Cf. fn. 94.

¹²⁰ AVP 18.15.1 reads *viśvabṛytam* for *viśvam idam*.

¹²¹ AVŚ 13.2.26 is, with considerable variations, RV 10.81.3, a verse rich in multiplicity references (see Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 169ff.). In both the AV and RV verses, the multiplicity references define divinities as creator gods filled with the forms to be emitted into externality.

¹²² Rohita stabilized heaven and earth with *Aja Ekapād* (cf. 13.1.6). The name of this minor deity has been interpreted in a variety of ways. Böhtlingk and Roth, following Yāska, take *aja* from \sqrt{vaj} ‘to drive’ and understand the name as ‘the one-footed (i.e., *ekapād*) driver’. The name is rendered by Bloomfield and Whitney (in their AV translations) as well as Keith (*Rel. and Philo.* I, 62) and Hermann Oldenberg, (*Die Religion des Veda* [Stuttgart und Berlin, 1923], p. 70) as ‘one-footed goat’ (*aja*). Renou (*Hymnes spéculatifs*, p. 204), Ludwig (*Der Rig-Veda III*, 537), K. Geldner in his RV translation, and A. Bergaigne *La Religion Védique III* [Paris, 1883], 20-25) take *aja* from \sqrt{jan} ‘to be born’ with the privative ‘a’ and understand the name as ‘the one-footed unborn One.’ In the AV context, I consider this the best interpretation. *Aja Ekapād* functions in AV 13.1.6 as a cosmic pillar holding the worlds apart. P. E. Dumont “The Indic God *Aja Ekapād*, the one-legged goat”, *JAOS* 53 [1933], 326-334, also considers the one foot as a sort of pillar supporting the sun; he believes *Aja Ekapād* represents the sun. R. N. Dandekar, “Universe in Vedic Thought”, *India*

him the celestial realm of light (*svār*¹²³) was firmly fixed, by him the vault of heaven (*náka-*) (was firmly fixed). By him the atmosphere (*antárikṣa-*) (and) the spaces (*rájas-*) were measured out;¹²⁴ through him the gods found immortality'¹²⁵ (AVŚ 13.1.7). The considerable significance of this verse lies in its clear description of the various cosmic spheres generated and maintained by Rohita; together they comprise the Vedic phenomenal and transcendental regions.

The Vedic phenomenal world was considered tripartite; the divisions, well indicated in AVŚ 12.3.20, are earth (*prthivī*), atmosphere (*antarikṣa*) and the sky (*div*).¹²⁶ The shape of this world inhabited by men and gods is hemispherical or as AVŚ 10.8.9 says, it is like a bowl with a horizontal opening and its bottom upward turned.¹²⁷ The sky, clearly a heavenly arc, has its delimitations; it is bonded on

Maior (J. Gonda Festschrift), Leiden, 1972), page 98, shares this view on the symbolism of the one foot; Bergaigne likewise considers Aja Ekapād as the supporter of the world.

Although Aja Ekapād is a very minor figure, the function he embodies is vital in the schema of Vedic cosmography. As noted below, the Vedic organized world is considered hemispherical. A concern that the sky remain arched above the earth is demonstrated from the earliest Rig Vedic creation myth onward: one of the first acts performed by the demigurge Indra is to separate heaven and earth, and support the sky to keep it from falling (cf. RV 5.29.4; 2.17.5). Other divinities besides Aja Ekapād symbolize this cosmic support. In the RV it is significant that Viṣṇu holds apart heaven and earth and fastens the earth all about with pegs (RV 7.99.3). (In the Mahābhārata, Aja is a name of Viṣṇu [MhBh III, 3, 6; XIII, 149, 95 vulg.]). In the AV, Skambha is the supreme principle conceived as Cosmic Pillar. Interestingly, some images Skambha is compared to, such as the *yakṣá* (in AV 10.7.38) and the tree (also 10.7.38; on the tree of life as a central world pillar, cf. F. B. J. Kuiper, "Cosmogony and Conception: A Query", *History of Religions* 10 [1970], 124ff.) are also conceived as central axes.

¹²³ Cf. AVŚ 13.2.39d: Rohita produced the *svār*; AVP 18.24.7 reads *rohito jyotir ucyate*.

¹²⁴ *vi vī mā* i.e., 'were produced or established'; cf. Gonda, "Māyā", pp. 170, 178.

¹²⁵ Presumably the gods found immortality in the *svār*, the navel of immortality (see AVŚ 4.11.6).

¹²⁶ The visible tripartite worlds are called *lokas* (e.g., AVŚ 12.3.20) and these are very often mentioned; see Gonda, *Loka*, 55, 62, 91-92.

¹²⁷ Below this region exists a chaotic, unorganized realm similar in concept to the Western notion of Hell. See W. Norman Brown, "The Rigvedic Equivalent for Hell", *JAOS* 61 (1941), 76-80; Kirsch, *Kosmographie*, pp. 51-52. Perhaps another visualization of the world's shape is given in RV 2.27.15, where heaven and earth each form the two halves of the sphere.

top by a vault, the *nāka*,¹²⁸ marking the boundary of the visible world.¹²⁹ Over the *nāka* is found the *svar*, another heavenly realm distinct and different from the visible sky. This cosmological progression is best described in AVŚ 4.14.13: 'From the back of the earth (*prthivyā*) I have ascended to the atmosphere (*antárikṣam*); from the atmosphere I have ascended to the sky (*dívam*); from the back of the vault of the sky (*divó nākasya prsthāt*) I have gone to heaven (*svār*), to light (*jyótih*).'¹³⁰ The heavenly regions above and below the *nāka* are different with respect to light. The *svar* as AVŚ 4.14.3 indicates, is a region of light; indeed this place seems to be the source of the light of the sun (cf. AVŚ 16.9.3). The radiance of the region above the *nāka* is contrasted with the 'darkness' below (cf. AVŚ 9.5.1; ¹³⁰ see also AVŚ 7.53.7). The space above the earth is usually denoted by *rajas*. This space was considered darker than the one which was attached to heaven.¹³¹ Further, the region above the *nāka* is hieratically superior to the region below. The *svar* is considered the center of immortality (cf. AVŚ 4.11.6) and the invisible realm wherefrom originates divine manifestations.¹³² This region filled with great celestial light is 'the highest heaven' (*parama- vyoman-*; cf. RV 4.50.4 and Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity," 175-176) and is therefore often designated by expressions which insist upon its physical and religious superiority.¹³³ In that all these cosmic regions are mentioned in AVŚ

¹²⁸ There is a tendency to multiply the number of vaults, just as there is a tendency to multiply each of the other lokas. For *trināka-* in the AV, see 9.5.10 (and cf. Gonda's remarks in *The Savayajñas*, p. 251); 19.27.4. Cf. RV 9.113.9, where *trināka-* is a synonym for *tridiva-*. W. Kirfel (*Kosmographie*, p. 4) conjectures that three earths / atmospheres and heavens may have developed as other heavens in addition to the visible heaven came to be postulated. Thereupon three earths, etc. were postulated to parallel the development of three heavens. For discussions on the multiple system of lokas see Kirfel; R. N. Dandekar, "Universe in Vedic Thought"; D. C. Sircar, *Cosmography and Geography in Early Indian Literature* (Calcutta, 1967).

¹²⁹ Keith, *Rel. and Philo.* I, 77.

¹³⁰ On *tamāmsi* see Gonda, *The Savayajñas*, p. 242.

¹³¹ Dandekar, "Universe", p. 101, but also see his fn. 8, p. 101.

¹³² Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", 174-177.

¹³³ E.g., AVŚ 17.6; 18.3.58; 19.53.3. For RV examples, see Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", 175. The reader will observe a great amount of condensation in the above cosmographic account. The subject proper of Vedic cosmography is complex and falls outside the present discussion. Needed are more than the few excellent studies devoted to this subject (e.g., Kirfel's *Kosmographie der Inder*; Gonda's

13.1.7, the intent of that verse is to portray Rohita as both the creator and preserver of the entire organized Vedic universe.

Having created the structure of the organized universe, Rohita continues, by cosmic parturition, to project all phenomenal forms into the visible world. ‘Rohita has stood high above the *nāka* generating all forms (*vिश्वा रूपाणि*), the young sage’ (AVŚ 13.1.11). The implication is of course that Rohita is omniform and that he initiates the emission process from the *svar*; the region (called *paramā- vyōman-* in AVŚ 13.1.44) is said to be Rohita’s abode.¹³⁴

The capacity of the creator to generate forms is inexhaustible as his structure comprises ‘a hundred bodies’ (*tanū-* AVŚ 13.4.44), indeed an innumerable number of bodies (cf. AVŚ 13.4.45). The idea is that the essence of the creator is composed of a limitless potentiality to give rise to phenomenal forms. Thus Rohita may be said to have an unlimited number of ‘births’ (cf. AVŚ 13.1.37 where the specification ‘1007’ connotes ‘a limitless number’). There is some indication that the power Rohita uses to create forms is *māyā*. AVŚ 13.2.3 states that by means of *māyā* Rohita makes day and night of diverse forms (i.e. of diverse colors¹³⁵).

The relationship between cosmography and the origin of phenomenal forms traced in the Rohita hymns is already evident in the RV. Rig Vedic notions on cosmography and divine manifestation correspond with the ideas expressed in the Rohita verses. In the RV, it is in the hymns to Soma that these ideas are expressed most clearly. Soma verses indicate that the omniform creator exists in the region above the *nāka*, and that it is from this region that the divinity projects into the world below the *nāka* those phenomenal forms which are the locations of its numinous power(s).¹³⁶ It is noteworthy that both the Soma and Rohita references make similar basic assumptions relating to the multiplicity concept. These are:

Loka; Dandekar’s “Universe”; H. Lüders’ *Varuna* I [Göttingen, 1951], esp. Chaps. II-IV. A thorough understanding of the relationship between the phenomenal world and the transcendental sphere will, I believe, elucidate a series of sophisticated notions showing the Vedic gods to be the visible manifestations of invisible natural forces and not the personification of such forces.

¹³⁴ It is also the exclusive realm of *Skambha-brāhmaṇ* in AVŚ 10.8.1.

¹³⁵ In AVŚ 19.49.4 Rātri, goddess of Night, makes herself many forms (i.e., many successions of nights) when she appears.

¹³⁶ See Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 153-156; 174ff.

1. that it is in the region above the *nāka* that the omniform (*viśvarūpa-*) creator exists,
2. that phenomenal forms originate from this sphere,
3. that these forms enter the regions below the *nāka* when emitted by the omniform creator.

It must be assumed that we have here a fundamental Vedic theory explaining the nature of creation and creator, the origin of material forms, and the existence of divine manifestations within the visible tripartite world of Vedic man.

The Rohita material, in addition to completely endorsing Rig Vedic cosmogonic and cosmographic notions, also exhibits speculative positions which anticipate Upaniṣadic thought. One significant development is that Rohita is said to have made all that has soul (*ātman*; AVŚ 13.1.52). Another is that Rohita is identified as being *brāhmaṇ* (AVŚ 13.1.33).¹³⁷ The idea that Rohita is a unifying principle is yet another; this is suggested in the last hymn of the Rohita series. The theme of the entire AVŚ 13.4 is an identification of Rohita (though not specifically named) with the outer world, in particular with divine powers and natural and cosmic phenomena.

V

Approximately seventeen of the AV multiplicity references describe the multiple body parts of some non-anthropomorphic entity. While such occurrences are not absent in the RV (for example RV 10.161.3 [= AVŚ 3.11.3 with some variations] speaks of ‘the thousand-eyed oblation’) in the AV these references are more frequent and more developed.

Multiplicity is ascribed to fearsome and inauspicious things such as witchcraft, curses, worms, demons; it is ascribed to things having beneficial magical properties such as amulets and plants, or it may be ascribed to ritual objects such as the sacrificial goat, the Brahman’s cow, the ricemess offering. Apparently, the multiplicity feature does not of itself have good or evil connotations. The above mentioned

¹³⁷ Possibly *brāhmaṇ* in AVŚ 13.2.13 also refers to Rohita. The multiplicity reference *tripād brāhma pururūpam* (AVŚ 9.10.19) probably denotes the three-footed gāyatrī verse which is many-formed (i.e., consisting of different stanzas in gāyatrī meter); see Edgerton, (“Atharva-Veda 13.1.10”, p. 57) who takes the phrase as a reference to the *gāyatrī-sāvitrī*.

oblation is thousand-eyed, but so is the curse (AVŚ 6.37.1); demons may be viewed as two-mouthed creatures (AVŚ 8.6.22) but so too is the Brahman's cow (AVŚ 5.19.7¹³⁸). It is the special distinction of the Brāhmaṇa in AVŚ 4.6.1 to be born first with ten heads and ten mouths; whatever else may be the significance of this image,¹³⁹ the student of Indian mythology is well aware that the demon Rāvaṇa in the Rāmāyaṇa is both a Brāhmaṇa and has ten heads. All these passages support the observation that possession of multiple body parts is free from moral distinctions.

Why it may be asked should body parts be ascribed to non-corporeal or non-anthropomorphic things? What function does the convention serve in these applications? In the main, the multiplicity convention attributes to the non-anthropomorphic entity a meaning related to that which this convention has when modifying a deity. Thus, for example, it is well recognized that attributing 'a thousand eyes' to a deity is a way of predicating 'omniscience'.¹⁴⁰ Similarly the power of complete knowledge appears to adhere to those cases where 'a thousand eyes' are ascribed to non-anthropomorphic entities. The *janigida* amulet which is thousand-eyed is believed to have the ability to vanquish by its watchfulness (*pratibodhá*- AVŚ 19.35.3). The *varaṇa* amulet, surely on account of its all-seeing/all-knowing properties¹⁴¹ has the uncanny power to be both a universal cure and ruinous to enemies (AVŚ 10.3.3). The thousand-eyed oblation, also having hundredfold (i.e. unlimited) strength and promoting a hundredfold life, has the power to restore life and remove obstacles (cf. AVŚ 3.11.3). The thousand-eyed curse of AVŚ 6.37.1 can seek after the sacrificer's curser; having complete

¹³⁸ AVŚ 5.19.7 details the calamity that befalls the killer of a Brahman's cow. A cow thus killed becomes eight-footed, four-eyed, four-eared, four-jawed, two-mouthed, two-tongued and shakes down the kingdom of the oppressor of the Brahman. The bodily parts mainly are doubles of the normal number; perhaps the multiplex image represents the victimized Brahman's cow transfigured into a formidable power capable of causing the destruction of the offender. In AVŚ 11.1.19, the thousand-backed rice-mess may also represent the transfigured universal form of the offering existing 'in the world of meritorious work'. Sāyana glosses *sahasrapṛṣṭhah* as *sahasrāvayavah* (in 11.1.19) and *sahasraśārirah* (in v. 20). Possibly *viśvarūpa-* in AVŚ 4.14.9 signifies the transfigured sacrificed goat.

¹³⁹ Cf. Bloomfield, *AV*, 374.

¹⁴⁰ See under Varuna, Soma, Agni, Sūrya in Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", and in the *AV*, see under Varuṇa and Rudra.

¹⁴¹ See fn. 25.

perspicuity, the curse can be expected to fall upon the enemy of the sacrificer and not on another (cf. AVŚ 6.37.2). It is the same with the thousand-eyed immortal evil which the sacrificer instructs to strike only whom he hates (AVŚ 6.26.3); with its total knowledge, evil infallibly knows whom to harm and whom to spare.¹⁴² One must imagine that the practice of magic and sorcery would be unthinkable were not some discriminatory quality attributed to the instrument of magic. This may account for the rather frequent use of the epithet 'thousand-eyed' with non-corporeal things.

Further, both non-corporeal and non-anthropomorphic entities are several times described as being 'omniform' (*viśvarūpa*-). When applied to demiurges and first principles, *viśvarūpa*- bespeaks of their pre-eminent creative capacity. When applied to non-anthropomorphic entities, their life-giving and life-sustaining powers are emphasized. AVŚ 6.59.3 illustrates well this use of *viśvarūpa*- . In this verse the *arundhati* plant is both *viśvārūpām* and *jivalām*, that is, 'omniform' and 'full of life' in the sense of 'life-giving.' So, too, in AVŚ 10.1.1, 2, 24 *viśvarūpa* applies to the product of the sorcerer and means 'vivifying.'¹⁴³ In a similar vein, a heavenly milk cow may be called both *viśvarūpā*- and *kāmadūghā* ('yielding wishes') in that she has the animating power which quickens desires to fruition (AVŚ 9.5.10).¹⁴⁴ The disease causing worm of AVŚ 2.32.2 is all-formed (*viśvarūpa*-), four-eyed,¹⁴⁵ variegated and whitish; *viśvarūpa*- probably connotes 'existing in all varieties.'¹⁴⁶ Kuhn's¹⁴⁷ discussion, on this and the related verse AVŚ 5.23.9¹⁴⁸ lays special emphasis on Vedic and Germanic charms

¹⁴² Bloomfield, *AV* 474.

¹⁴³ Gonda, *The Savayajñas*, p. 323.

¹⁴⁴ On this vs. cf. Gonda. *The Savayajñas*, pp. 92; 251.

¹⁴⁵ 'Four-eyed' could signify 'all-seeing' (e.g., RV 1.31.13 discussed in Srinivasan, "RV Multiplicity", 162) or, 'with spots over the eyes' (see Bloomfield, *AV* ad stanza 2, p. 318).

¹⁴⁶ So also Sāyana who glosses the term as *nānākāram*.

¹⁴⁷ A. Kuhn, "Indische und germanische Segenssprüche", *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung* XIII (1864), 135ff.

¹⁴⁸ AVŚ 5.23.9 bcd = AVŚ 2.32.2bcd. Pāda 9a describes the worm as having three heads (*triśirsān-*) and being triple-humped (*trikakúd-*). *Triśirsān-* is not repeated in the AV; *trikakúd-* recurs only in AVŚ 4.9.8 where it describes a mountain. In the RV, *triśirsān-* is the exclusive epithet of the demon Viśvarūpa, son of Tvaṣṭṛ. Perhaps in 5.23.9a the epithet alludes to the menacing aspect of the worm. Another instance where multiple bodily parts may represent the ominous nature of something occurs in AVŚ 8.6.22: the demon capable of harming the pregnant woman is described as two-mouthed, four-eyed, five-footed and fingerless.

which distinguish different types of harmful worms. In a related sense, the plants are said in AVŚ 8.7.8 to bear ‘a thousand names,’ that is, they exist in ‘a thousand (i.e. limitless) varieties’. ¹⁴⁹

VI

We may conclude by drawing attention to several important contributions the AV makes towards the understanding of the religious significance of multiple body parts.

The AV demonstrates that when multiple body parts and forms are ascribed to the divine, that deity, in nearly every case, is associated with creation on a cosmic scale. The AV thus strongly endorses the basic symbolic value which the RV attributes to the multiplicity convention. Important, however, for our broader study is to note the areas wherein the two *samhitās* work differently with the basic concept; these differences allow for greater insight into the concept. Whereas the Rig Vedic verses mentioning multiplicity demonstrate a remarkable internal consistency permitting of three discreet, secondary definitions (Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity,” 140) the Atharva Veda references employ the basic concept in conjunction with pre-Upaniṣadic speculative notions. Combining evidence mainly from the Skambha and Rohita material, it is seen that an omniform (*viśvarūpa*-) creator, who generates (\sqrt{jan}) creation (i.e. who emits [$\sqrt{sṛj}$] the universe by an act of cosmic parturition) is identified with *brāhmaṇ*. He is also brought into association with *ātman* in being either identical to *ātman* (Skambha), or in creating all that has *ātman* (Rohita). Further, the omniform creator is a unifying force, the source of all phenomenality, and the object of the search for knowledge into the underlying power of the universe. Thus the Atharva Veda, in linking the basic Rig Vedic multiplicity concept with more advanced speculative notions, opens the possibility that much of the original significance of multiple bodily parts and forms continues intact in the oldest Upaniṣadic material. If, upon analysis of the pertinent Upaniṣads, this proves to be so, it would go a long way towards understanding the religious significance of early Indian devotional icons. ¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ J. Gonda, *Notes on Names and the Name of God in Ancient India* (Amsterdam, London, 1970), p. 14. According to Gonda “a name is a form or a mode of existence”.

¹⁵⁰ The Upaniṣads begin, of course, to approach closer in time the plastic

Since devotional icons of (Rudra-) Śiva are, from the outset, represented with multiple body parts, it is worthwhile to summarize significant developments of Rudra in the AV, especially with regard to the multiplicity convention. Rudra is still a minor god in the AV, being mentioned only 55 times in the hymns. However, his growing stature is discernible. One factor in the rise of Rudra is his intensified ambivalence, as both heightened destructive and benign traits are ascribed to him.¹⁵¹ Another factor is his fusion with Agni whereby, the quality of omniscience may have shifted over to Rudra. In the AV, Rudra indeed exemplifies omniscience, being more frequently called ‘thousand-eyed’ than the other gods with whom he shares this quality (Bhava and Śarva; Kāla; Varuṇa). It should be emphasized that the power of omniscience in the RV implies additional exaltedness. The Rig Vedic verses describing omniscient Varuṇa indicate that the all-knowing god is posited in an invisible sphere above the *nāka* wherefrom he ‘sees’ both phenomenal things below as well as transcendental things.¹⁵² It may be assumed that this conceptualization also adheres to omniscient Rudra in the AV, and that his station too is in the highest heaven. Certainly the image fits Rudra’s role as creator god in the RV, and the increasing majesty of his personage in the AV.

appearance of the convention. The older Upaniṣads date c. 6th-3rd C. B.C. and the seminal Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad was probably compiled sometime between the 5th and 4th C. B.C., coming after the Brhadāraṇyaka and Chāndogya Upaniṣads and preceding the Bhagavad Gītā.

¹⁵¹ Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism*, pp. 104-105.

¹⁵² Cf. Srinivasan, “RV Multiplicity”, 152-153.

TABLE I

Index of AVŚ verses ascribing multiple body parts and forms to creator gods and divine principles (A) and magical entities (B).

(A)

- Agni: 4.5.1 (= RV 7.55.7); 4.33.6 (\cong RV 1.97.6); 4.39.10; 5.27.1; 6.76.1;
18.2.8; 18.4.11; 19.3.2
Aditi: 8.9.21
brāhmaṇa: 9.10.19
Cosmic Bull: 4.8.3 (= RV 3.38.4); 9.4.7, 22
Indra: 17.1.13
Kāla: 19.53.1
Kāma: 9.2.25
Ratri: 19.49.4
Rohita: 13.1.12; 13.2.26 (\cong RV 10.81.3), 28; 13.4.44, 45
Rudra: 11.2.3, 7, 17. Bhava and Sarva: 4.28.3
Skambha: 10.7.8; 10.8.11, 27
Sūrya: 19.27.7
Śyena: 7.41.2
Tvaṣṭṛ: 18.1.5 (= RV 10.10.5)
Varuṇa: 4.16.4; 5.1.8; 10.10.28

(B)

- Amulets: 10.3.3; 19.35.3
Brāhmaṇa: 4.6.1
Cow: 5.19.7; 9.5.10
Curse: 6.37.1
Demons: 8.6.22
Evil: 6.26.3
Goat: 4.14.9
Oblation: 3.11.3 (\cong RV 10.161.3)
Plant: 6.59.3
Rice Mess: 11.1.19
Witchcraft: 10.1.1, 2, 24
Worms: 2.32.2; 5.23.9

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SECONDARY BURIAL AT ÇATAL HÜYÜK

In recent years the amount of material available for the study of Neolithic religion has been enormously increased by the partial excavation of the spectacular site of Çatal Hüyük, near Konya in south-central Turkey.¹ At this site part of a thirty-two acre town has been revealed, consisting of a number of rectangular single-storied houses, built close together so that the only means of access was through the roof. Inside the houses, rooms were provided with low clay platforms which served as seats, work-benches and beds. As well as dwelling-houses there were many buildings which seem to have been shrines. These were similar to the houses in size and structure, but had superior decoration in the form of reliefs and wall-paintings, and it is this material which provides abundant new evidence for the religion of the Neolithic period in Anatolia.

The interpretation of material of this type is a hazardous task; in some cases it can profitably be compared with information from later periods, not only in Anatolia itself but also in the Aegean area and Crete. A close study by B. C. Dietrich for instance has shown² that a good deal of the Çatal Hüyük material can be linked with what we know of Cretan religion. Dietrich does much to clarify the beliefs of the inhabitants of the town on the most basic problems of existence, and to illuminate the symbolic representation of the cycle of birth, death and rebirth on the walls of their shrines. But there are several features which he has to admit³ are unparalleled in the Cretan evidence. Notable among these are pictures of vultures hovering above headless corpses and of piles of human skulls and bones under what

¹ Preliminary reports on the Çatal Hüyük excavations are to be found in Anatolian Studies (AS) XII (1962), pp. 41-62; XIII (1963), pp. 43-103; XIV (1964), pp. 39-119; XVI (1966), pp. 165-191. General descriptions are to be found in J. Mellaart, *A Neolithic City in Turkey* (in *Scientific American* (April 1964), pp. 94-104); in J. Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations of the Near East* (1965), pp. 81-101; and most fully in J. Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük* (1966). These do not include the results of the 1965 season. A more recent summary can be found in J. Mellaart, *The Neolithic of the Near East* (1975).

² B. C. Dietrich, *Some Light from the East on Cretan Cult Practice* in *Historia* XVI (1967), pp. 385-413.

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 389-90.

appear to be structures of reed and matting. Clearly these must be of importance for a full understanding of religion at Çatal Hüyük, and it is perhaps worth while to consider them more fully in an attempt to find a clue to their meaning and significance.

Vultures, corpses and skulls are connected with death, and any study of what the citizens of Çatal Hüyük believed about death must also take into account the way in which they disposed of their corpses.⁴ These were buried about two feet under the floors of the houses and shrines, either in a contracted position or extended on their backs. Normally they were placed under the sleeping-platforms, and only exceptionally are bodies found in oval graves outside the platform area. Several factors suggest that the bodies were not buried immediately after death. The tightness with which the bones were flexed and bound, the twisted and contorted positions of anatomically intact skeletons, the parcels of disjointed bones, the skulls wrapped in cloth, and the preservation of textiles below the skeletons all suggest that the dead were placed in the graves only when their flesh had been removed. After this primary excarnation the bones of the dead were laid on mats, placed in baskets, or wrapped in several layers of cloth, skin or fur, and then swathed in a net-like fabric, tied with a cord or with a narrow woven tape, and laid in the graves. Differing degrees of excarnation were observed, and it appears that rather than digging holes in the sleeping-platforms for individual burials the inhabitants retained the bones of the dead until they could be communally deposited. After the burial the hole was filled in and the entire building was replastered.

Grave-goods found include jewellery, weapons and toilet-articles. These objects are often of superb quality, and some graves are richly endowed with them. Some at least of the bones are decorated with red, blue or green paint. It is noticeable that there are far more women and children than adult males in the graves.

No direct archaeological evidence has been found to illustrate the treatment of the corpses before their final burial, and it is here that the interpretation of wall-paintings comes to our aid. A painting in Shrine E VIIb i⁵ appears to show human bones, especially skulls, resting

⁴ AS XII, pp. 51-2; AS XIII, pp. 95-101; AS XIV, pp. 92-97; AS XVI, pp. 182-3.

⁵ AS XIII, p. 98 and Plate XXVIa.

under a light structure of reeds and matting, and this the excavator takes to represent the structure in which bodies were exposed before final burial. Another painting, in Shrine VII 8,⁶ shows vultures hovering over headless human bodies, and this suggests that vultures helped in the process of excarnation. On the other hand a picture in Shrine VII 21⁷ shows vultures similarly occupied, but this time the vultures have human feet. The implication may be that they are not vultures, but rather human beings dressed as vultures and engaged in some special ritual. There is also evidence elsewhere of the use of the vulture in connection with the Great Goddess of Çatal Hüyük in her aspect as a goddess of death,⁸ and it is interesting to note the presence of human skulls on the floor of the shrine with the human-vulture paintings. Skulls in fact seem to be of considerable importance in the cult. It is significant that during the process of cleaning the skeletons 'the only parts left undisturbed were the brains'.⁹ This must mean that the heads were either removed or protected in some way.

What was the point of this excarnation before burial? After an initial comparison with the 'Palaeolithic' Onge Pygmies of the Andaman Islands¹⁰ Mr. Mellaart came to the conclusion that it was probably for hygienic reasons.¹¹ No-one wants a decomposing body under the bed. But this is, I think, to transpose modern ideas to Neolithic Anatolia, and it is contrary to all that we know of burial ceremonies in other communities. A dead human body is not like the body of a dead animal; its disposal is a matter of more than hygienic importance. The ritual of death is of enormous significance for the dead and for the living, and it may be worth while to compare what we have found at Çatal Hüyük with what is found in communities in other parts of the world, and to try if possible to draw conclusions from the comparison which will help us to gain a greater understanding of Neolithic religion in the Middle East. I need hardly say that in making an attempt to produce ethnological parallels for archaeological evidence I am well aware of the dangers that are involved. 'The raw material of prehistory', in Pro-

⁶ AS XIV, p. 64 and Fig. 20.

⁷ AS XIV, p. 64 and Figs. 21-2.

⁸ AS XIII, pp. 70 and 90; Plate XXIIc, d; Fig. 26. Cf. AS XIV, p. 64.

⁹ AS XIV, p. 93.

¹⁰ AS XII, p. 52, with reference to *Illustrated London News*, Feb. 3rd 1962, p. 187.

¹¹ AS XIII, p. 95; AS XIV, p. 93.

fessor R. J. C. Atkinson's often-quoted words,¹² 'is not men, but things', and no amount of wishful thinking will alter this. Yet always there is the nagging feeling that one's ultimate object should be to go back *via* the things to the men who made them, to build up as complete a picture of prehistoric life as is possible, given the nature of the evidence. In recent years archaeologists have tended to concentrate on the technology and subsistence economics of ancient societies. Inferences on these subjects, as Professor C. F. C. Hawkes has shown, are relatively easy to make, and relatively likely to be free from error.¹³ But inferences on social, political and religious institutions are much more difficult and much more dangerous, and many prominent archaeologists have spoken out against them. Their point has been well made by Professor Glyn Daniel.¹⁴ 'Prehistory', he says, 'cannot speak of the social organisation or the religious beliefs of prehistoric society, and this is a fundamental limitation of prehistory. When prehistorians speak of the ideas and ideals of men before writing, they are making guesses'. This of course is true, but it need not prevent the archaeologist from making guesses, provided that he recognises what he is doing, and that his imagination is kept carefully under control. One method of guessing which has been much used in the past, but is at present largely out of favour, is by the use of ethnological parallels, a method described by Professor Daniel as of 'doubtful validity'. Professor Hawkes too has pointed out its limitations. 'You can use ethnological data obtained from modern primitives to stimulate your imagination by suggesting the sort of religious institutions and spiritual life your prehistoric people may or could have had, but you cannot demonstrate this way what they did have'. Yet I am encouraged by Professor Stuart Piggott,¹⁵ who feels that by a 'judicious' use of analogy inferences can be made, although 'inference from archaeological evidence alone can inform us of only the broadest aspects of social structure or religious belief, and that often in a very tentative way'. So while I recognise that in attempting to use an ethnographic parallel I am 'making guesses' in 'a very tentative way', I feel that it is impor-

¹² R. J. C. Atkinson, *Archaeology, History and Science* (1960), p. 8.

¹³ C. F. C. Hawkes, *Archaeological Theory and Method: Some Suggestions from the Old World*, in *American Anthropologist* LVI (1954), pp. 155-168.

¹⁴ G. E. Daniel, *The Idea of Prehistory* (1964), p. 132.

¹⁵ Stuart Piggott, *Ancient Europe* (1965), p. 8.

tant to 'stimulate your imagination' in this manner. Guesses may well be wrong, but guesswork, if it is not allowed to run away with itself, is, I feel, better than an admission of complete defeat. At least I hope that any guesses I may make are free from the error rightly condemned by Professor Daniel.¹⁶ It is certainly fallacious to assume 'that the identity of form between the artifacts of modern pre-literates and of prehistoric societies means not only probable identity of function in material culture, but also identity in the social structure and mental and spiritual beliefs of the two societies being compared'. The fact that you have the same sort of tools does not mean that you have the same sort of gods. But there are certain aspects of prehistoric cultures which are clearly connected with spiritual beliefs of some sort, and comparison of these aspects is rather different from comparison of artifacts. Tombs and grave-goods are artifacts, and must be treated as such, but matters such as the treatment and arrangement of the body, and the presence or absence of gravegoods, are not artifacts, and must be interpreted in a different way. If such matters are compared with similar arrangements in other societies, ancient or modern, this is an argument, not from similarity of rational technology to similarity of beliefs, but from similarity of non-rational behaviour to similarity of beliefs, a genuine attempt to interpret non-technological information in non-technological terms. We are now in a position where it is possible to trace in outline man's increasingly successful efforts to control his environment by technological, 'rational' methods. But clearly there is another side to the picture, a non-technological, non-rational side which cannot be ignored if we are to have a rounded view of pre-literate societies. Technological control in our own society has advanced so much that archaeologists often fail to understand, or even to see the need for, the non-technological approach. But this approach was an essential part of most, if not all, ancient societies, and if we are to understand these societies in human rather than merely technological terms, it is essential to follow up the clues provided by graves, cult-objects and so on. Guess-work it may be, but it is (I hope) controlled guesswork aimed at giving a fuller and more complete picture of ancient societies.

Of course even if there is some excuse for making ethnological

¹⁶ Daniel, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

comparisons, there are other difficulties which must be admitted and clearly understood. First, a great deal of ethnological information, especially that used by scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was gathered by travellers and missionaries who allowed their own ideas and prejudices to colour the information they collected. Often too they did not have sufficient knowledge of native languages to understand fully what was meant by talk on such subjects as the soul and the afterlife. Again it is easy to fall into the error of the 'scissors-and-paste' school of anthropology and simply comb one's sources for any snippets of information which happen to fit one's pre-conceived ideas, forcibly removing the selected customs from their social contexts and so rendering them completely meaningless. In this field the non-specialist is completely at the mercy of the experts, but modern anthropologists are very conscious of the dangers of their calling, and very careful to avoid the errors of their predecessors. Still, it must be admitted that ethnological comparison is both difficult and dangerous. That however is not to say that it should not be attempted.

The custom of double burial is by no means unique. It is so widely distributed about the world that it is unlikely, if not impossible, that all instances have a common origin. It is much more probable that they have risen from similar reactions to similar situations, and if so the examination of other instances may help us in interpreting the evidence from Çatal Hüyük. For this purpose the best collection of evidence is to be found in a paper by Robert Hertz, published in 1907¹⁷ and more recently translated into English by Rodney and Claudia Needham.¹⁸ In this paper Hertz illustrates the custom of double burial primarily in Indonesia but also in other communities, and then draws conclusions

¹⁷ R. Hertz, *Contribution à une étude sur la représentation collective de la mort*, in *L'Année Sociologique* X (1907), pp. 48-137.

¹⁸ *A Contribution to the Study of the Collective Representation of Death*, in R. Hertz, *Death and the Right Hand* (1960). It may seem dangerous to use as primary evidence an article which appeared as long ago as 1907, but I take courage from the fact that it has been republished by translators who are themselves experts in the Indonesian field, and who consider that the evidence and conclusions are sufficiently valid to justify such publication. A more recent treatment of the subject is to be found in W. Stöhr, *Das Totenritual der Dajak*, in *Ethnologica NF* 1 (1959). The attitude of professional anthropologists towards this work and that of Hertz can be well seen in the reviews on successive pages of *American Anthropologist* 63 (1961), pp. 599-602.

on the nature of the rites. Although his conclusions should not be accepted uncritically,¹⁹ it is easy to see how important Hertz's work is for a fuller understanding of Çatal Hüyük. Perhaps a brief summary will illustrate this more clearly.

Among the Dayak of Borneo a dead body is not taken at once to its final burial-place. The bodies of chiefs and wealthy people are kept in their houses. (So much for hygiene!) Lesser bodies are laid either in a miniature wooden house raised on piles or, more often, on a kind of platform simply covered by a roof. Sometimes this is near the house, but more often it is in a distant part of the forest. The houses of the dead are light structures like those used by the Dayak when they have to live temporarily by their more distant rice-fields. Once placed in its house, the body remains there until it decomposes, sometimes for seven or eight months, sometimes for as much as ten years, and during this period the survivors have certain duties to perform. As the body putrefies, they have to collect the putrefaction and see that it drains into the ground, or into pottery vessels. In some cases they smear it on their bodies, or mix it with rice and eat it. They also keep the body company, give it food, keep a fire constantly burning, and beat gongs to keep malignant spirits at bay.

When the period of exposure is completed and the time has come for the final burial, the bones are brought back to the village and placed either in the dead man's house, which is richly decorated, or in a house specially erected for the occasion. There they are washed and any flesh still clinging to them is removed. They are then put into a new wrapping, which is often of a rich and precious kind, and laid on a sort of catafalque. The most precious family treasures are placed near the bones, to ensure the dead an opulent life in the other world. Invitations to the final burial are sent out to all the surrounding tribes, and are never refused. When the guests arrive, priestesses take the wrapped-up bones in their arms and parade them inside the feast-house for two whole days, singing all the time. The festival starts quietly and solemnly, but after the final burial of the bones it ends in singing, drinking and feasting. In fact the burial-feast may last up to a month. It requires a great deal of preparation and may reduce the

¹⁹ See for instance E. E. Evans-Pritchard in his introduction to the English translation and in *Theories of Primitive Religion* (1965), pp. 48-77.

family of the deceased to extreme poverty. So it is often held for several deceased persons at one time, or repeated at regular intervals—every three years, for instance—for all those who have died in the meantime. The bones are finally placed in coffins, or in urns, or wrapped in cloth, and deposited in special houses, some near the houses of the living, others at a distance but on land specially reserved for the family. Thus the second burial is collective, or at least familial, in contrast to the first burial, which is usually isolated. In some communities the bones are given a permanent place in the house of the living. In the Malay Archipelago this happens mainly when chiefs or important people are buried, and it is almost always the head alone which enjoys the privilege. It is decorated and placed inside the house or in a small niche close to it. In certain cases it is offered food or anointed with a special liquid; it is part of the family's sacred treasure and ensures its prosperity.

This then is the way in which the Dayak and other peoples dispose of their dead. But a funeral ceremony, as Hertz is careful to point out,²⁰ concerns not only the body of the dead, but also his soul, and it is also of vital importance to the living who are left to mourn. It is worth while considering these aspects too, for in looking at them we may find a fuller understanding of the Çatal Hüyük ritual. The soul of the deceased does not reach its final destination as soon as the body dies. It passes through a sort of probationary period while the body is decomposing, and only when decomposition is complete is it fully admitted to the realms of the dead. During the intermediate period it has to return to the earth for food which is provided by the mourners, who, as we have seen, remain by the body for this purpose. The offering particularly favoured by the soul is that of a human head, but even this does not ensure its full passage to the world of the dead until after the final ceremony. So as the body sheds its impurity and is gradually reduced to its most permanent state, the soul also has to wait to reach its final destination. During this period the deceased is not regarded as being really dead. The soul is a frequent visitor to the corpse, and is a dangerous and malicious being. It has to rely on its relatives for its food, and meanwhile it remembers all the wrongs it suffered in life and tries to avenge them. So the mourners are required to be punc-

²⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 34ff.

tilious in their attendance on the body or malignant diseases will descend on them, inflicted by the angry soul. In the presence of such danger they are deserted by men and protective spirits alike, for death is contagious and pollutes everything it touches. Often the dead man's property has to be destroyed, or dedicated to him and buried with him, or ritually purified. Often too the only way of removing the obligations of mourning is the sacrifice of a human victim. This is normally a slave or a war-prisoner who has previously been magically deprived of his soul, thus freeing the community from the possibility of any disaster which that angry spirit could inflict. The victim is chained to a sacrificial post, and the male relatives of the deceased act as sacrificers, dancing and leaping around the victim and striking him at random with their spears. The screams of pain are greeted with shouts of joy, for the more cruel the torture the happier the souls are in heaven. When the victim finally falls he is decapitated amid screams of intense joy, his blood is collected by a priestess and sprinkled on the living, and the head it either stuck on a post near the final burial or buried with the deceased.

Mention has already been made of the ritual parade of priestesses carrying the parcels of bones. These priestesses are also thought to carry with them the souls of the mourners wrapped in their aprons, to raise them to heaven and to persuade the beneficent spirits to regenerate them and give them full life again. Thereafter the mourners are ritually purified and freed from the contagion of death by bathing in the river. Sometimes the blood of sacrificial victims is poured into the water, and as the mourners swim to the bank the priestesses, who accompany them in boats, thrust aside evil influences from their bodies with burning torches and sacred brooms. Thereafter they are able to return freely to normal life. They make their toilet, change their clothes for new ones, and put on their best swords and ornaments. 'It can be seen', as Hertz says,²¹ that there is a complete parallelism between the rites which introduce the deceased, washed and dressed in new clothes, into the company of his ancestors, and those which return his family to the company of the living: or rather it is one and the same act of liberation applied to two different categories of persons'.

So we see that the ceremony on the occasion of the final burial is

²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

not merely a hygienic disposal of the bones. As well as the burial of the remains it ensures for the soul peace and access to the land of the dead, and for the living freedom from the obligations of mourning. Behind the act of double burial lies something of much wider and deeper significance. As the bones are removed from isolation and placed in a communal tomb, so the soul is removed from the isolation of its probationary period and admitted to the communion of ancestors; so too the mourners are freed from their isolation and admitted once more to the community. The burial rite is at the same time death and rebirth. It is not a farewell to a finally departed member of the community, but a rite of initiation to a higher status. Like birth, coming-of-age and marriage, it marks the passage of the individual from one group to another.

The soul incidentally does not remain eternally in the spirit-world. After staying there for a period of seven generations it 'descends on earth again and enters a mushroom or a fruit, preferably near the village. When a woman eats this fruit or mushroom the soul enters her body and is soon reborn in human form. But if the fruit is eaten by certain animals, a buffalo, a deer or a monkey, the soul will be reincarnated in an animal body; should this animal be eaten by man, the soul will return among humanity by this detour'.²² Death is not an event of complete finality, but an endlessly repeated episode.

It is interesting to note that some categories of people are excluded from the normal funerary ritual. Hertz mentions²³ first children, who are not fully separated from the spirit world and so can return directly to it, secondly the very old, who are already well on their way to the other world and have no need of external aids, and thirdly those who have died violently or by accident. Their bodies inspire the most intense horror, and are got rid of with all possible speed. Their bones are not laid with those of the other members of the group, and their souls live apart from the others, forming a special community which is regarded as that of either 'the Damned' or 'the Elect'.

Hertz's final conclusion is that the custom of double burial ultimately reflects the fact that it takes a society a great deal of time to adjust to the death of one of its members. 'In the final analysis, death as a social

²² *Op. cit.*, pp. 60-61.

²³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.

phenomenon consists in a dual and painful process of mental disintegration and synthesis. It is only when this process is completed that society, less its peace recovered, can triumph over death'.²⁴ Conclusions of this sort are, as Professor Evans-Pritchard has pointed out,²⁵ difficult either to confirm or to refute, but there is little doubt that even if this social reintegration is not the purpose of the custom, it is one of its important results. It is impossible, at least by current research methods, to check on whether the soul does in fact reach its new life, but it is possible to check on the mourners, and there is no doubt that they do. To this extent at least Hertz's conclusion seems to be a valid one.

Whether or not the purpose of double burial is ultimately a social one it is, to those who make use of it, based on interesting ideas of the connection between life and the body. The body is obviously impermanent. It begins to change as soon as what we call life ceases, and continues to change until it reaches a state of permanence in the clean, fleshless skeleton. So it is felt that at least a part of the life or soul of the deceased resides in the bones, and especially in the skull, which in life is the seat of taste, smell, sight, hearing and speech, most of the functions which go to make up the living personality. Just as in life a man is a member of a community, so too when he dies he does not cease to be a member of that community, and his body, and especially his skeleton, has to be treated like any other member. It has to be protected and given its rights, and because of its connection with the spirit world it is rather more powerful than most living members. The bones, if you like, are 'sacred' or 'magically potent'. Their retention within the community will bring good fortune, while their ill-treatment or desecration by enemies will bring disaster. Hence it is important to protect them and benefit from their proximity, by keeping them within the house, by wearing them, or by pulverising them and rubbing them into the skin or eating them.

What conclusions can we draw from this for Çatal Hüyük? It will by now be clear that much of the evidence from the site can well be interpreted in terms of the type of thought we have been discussing. Primary excarnation is virtually certain, and the existence of light

²⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 86.

²⁵ *Op. cit.*, n. 19, p. 76.

structures in which this took place is a reasonable guess. Final burial was clearly given at a set time rather than when individual decomposition was completed, and this suggests a 'Feast of Souls' such as we have seen in Indonesia and other parts of the world. At this feast there is evidence for the cleaning and redressing of the bones, for the laying of precious personal objects in the graves, and for the decoration of at least some bones. Burial under the bed means both protection for the skeletons and benefit for those who sleep above them,²⁶ and the disturbance of earlier burials by later ones suggests that eventually the power residing in bones wore out or departed, perhaps to a rebirth in a new body.²⁷ In some graves there was a preponderance of skulls, and this may mean either that when old bones were thrown out the skulls were still felt to have power, or, more probably, that the skulls were those of sacrificial victims for the liberation of the living and the well-being of the dead. The complete replastering of houses after burials has been taken to show that the 'Feast of Souls' took place in the spring, the normal time for less redecoration. Whether this is true or not, the replastering was not simply spring-cleaning, but visible evidence of the cleansing and purification of the house of the deceased. The purpose of the 'vulture-shrine' remains enigmatic: the skulls which lay on the floor of the shrine may have been those either of prominent citizens or of sacrificial victims; the humans dressed as vultures (if they existed) may have been the Anatolian equivalent of the Indonesian priestesses who carry with them at the final burial ceremony both the bones of the dead and the souls of the living, and finally free the latter and return them to normal life. This shrine may

²⁶ The burial practices at Çatal Hüyük and other ancient sites have often been described as 'ancestor-worship', but this, I think, is a misunderstanding of the evidence. Ancestors in such cases are not worshipped as (say) the Christian God is worshipped; they have, like other groups, their place and their rights within the community, and their maintenance, like that of other groups, is vital for the well-being of the community as a whole. It is worth stressing again that death is not completely final, but a passage to a higher status within the community.

²⁷ The pictorial representation of rebirth is perhaps to be seen in two paintings (AS XIII, p. 69, Figs. 11 & 12, and Plates XIb & XII) in which, it has been suggested, the soul is portrayed in the form of a bee or butterfly. For a discussion of this see AS XIII, pp. 80-81, and B. C. Dietrich, *op. cit.*, n. 2, pp. 410-413. If the suggestion is accepted, the apparent presence of a chrysalis attached to the roof of the 'charnel-house' where bones were exposed for excarnation (AS XIII, p. 98 and Plate XXVIa) is extremely significant.

in fact have been the place where the cleansing ceremonies in connection with the final burial were carried out.

It has already been mentioned that there are far more women and children than adult males in the graves, and the excavator has suggested²⁸ that this may be due to the fact that many men were killed while away from home on hunting expeditions. We are reminded that in Indonesia and elsewhere those who have died violently or by accident find no resting-place with the bones of the family.

Are all these resemblances purely accidental, or can we see at Çatal Hüyük yet another example of the beliefs which have been found in so many other communities? Can we suppose that as in those communities these beliefs were reflected in ritual? Dare we imagine at Çatal Hüyük a conception of the long-drawn-out passage of souls to the world of their ancestors, and allied to it the guarding and tendance of exposed bodies, the gathering of putrefaction-liquids, the feasting and drinking of the Festival of Souls, the violent and sanguinary sacrifice of human

²⁸ AS XIV, p. 93. This idea is treated in greater detail in AS XVI, p. 191, in connection with the 'Hunting Shrines' F V i (AS XVI, pp. 184-90) and A III i (AS XII, pp. 62-65). These shrines are decorated with wall-paintings which show large animals, especially bull and stag, surrounded by human figures apparently dancing and, in some cases, leaping on the animals' backs or swinging on their tails, horns or tongues. There is no indication that the animals are being hunted or killed; on the contrary, the scenes look much more like festivities of some kind, with dancing and acrobatics as an essential part of them. The two shrines also differ from the normal rule in containing only female burials, and the excavator suggests that they were cenotaphs, shrines built in memory of hunters killed 'in action', whose bodies had not been recovered, and whose widows were buried alone, accompanied by painted representations of heroic deeds attributed to their husbands in this world or the next. There is an element of truth in this, but I feel that these paintings are something more than mere memorials of imaginary heroic deeds. The bodies of those who are killed by accident or violence cannot be brought back into the home, presumably because they are charged with 'mana'; they have touched power and been blasted by it, and thus cannot be readmitted without danger to the community at large. But this touching of power, though dangerous, is not necessarily bad, and so even if the actual bodies of the blasted have to be left in isolation, they can at least be symbolically restored in art. So they are portrayed on the walls, but the situations in which they are shown are not so much acts of heroism as a means of illustrating symbolically the close and personal relationship which in a society of this type exists between men and animals. The enormous size of the animals in relation to the humans must, I feel, be an example of the frequent convention which equates large size with superior power (e.g. Pharaohs in Egyptian art are taller than the mere mortals who accompany them).

victims, and the final purification of mourners in the blood-red waters of the nearby Çarşamba Çay? ²⁹

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²⁹ In this article I have deliberately refrained from commenting on such matters as the Jericho 'skull-cult', the 'skull-cult' of Palaeolithic man, the custom of secondary burial in earthen long barrows in Neolithic Britain, the accompaniment of the dead by 'slaughtered retainers' in the same region and period, the custom of 'cephalotaphy' among the Beaker People, and much other material of the same type. If my initial comparison is acceptable, my conclusion may be of assistance in interpreting these and other aspects of prehistoric religion.

THE PRESENT STATE OF RESEARCH IN SOUTH AMERICAN MYTHOLOGY

Since it is impossible to present South American mythology as a unified whole, for no such unity exists,¹ or as the isolated lore of each tribe,² because this would be an endless task, we shall confine our attention to a select number of indigenous societies within a few

¹ As the majority of the general works on mythology divide the subject according to geographic areas, South American mythology appears in them side by side with African and Oceanic mythologies, for instance. Sometimes it is a part of "American mythology," or of "Latin American mythology." In fact, all these divisions are more or less arbitrary. There is an irreducible variety among South American traditional stories and, on the other hand, many mythological motifs coincide with those of Central and North America, and in some cases with motifs of the mythologies of the Old World. Mythology, as psychology and human anatomy, is basically one around the world. Collections of retold South American myths will be found in Hartley Burr Alexander, *The Mythology of all Races*, vol. II: *Latin America* (Boston: Marshall Jones, 1920); Max Fauconnet, "Mythology of the Two Americas," in *Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, ed. Felix Guirand (London: Hamlyn, 1959, first published in French as *Larousse Mythologie Générale* by Librairie Larousse, Paris, 1936); and Mariano Izquierdo Gallo, C.M.F., *Mitología americana* (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1957). For a masterful but too brief synthesis, see A. Métraux, "South America: Creation and Destruction," in *Larousse World Mythology*, ed. Pierre Grimaldi (London: Hamlyn, 1973, first published in French by Librairie Larousse, Paris, 1963). In Harald Osborne, *South American Mythology* (London: Hamlyn, 1968) the myths of the Andean peoples take up most of the available space; the pictures are excellent. In Veronica Ions, *The World's Mythology in Color* (London: Hamlyn, 1974) the brief section on South America again is almost totally devoted to Andean mythology.

² It is practically impossible to estimate the number of tribal groups living at present in South America. There is no universally accepted concept of tribe, and most censuses of Indian populations are unreliable. We also have only approximate figures for Indian languages. It has been reported that archival materials contain two to three thousand names of languages, many of which must be synonyms for or dialects of languages already counted. Modern linguists estimate that there may be around 1,500 different South American languages, present or extinct. "Some of these languages are disappearing, or even being eliminated by genocide; a few, such as Quechua, continue to spread to people who previously did not know them but many—including some spoken by only a few hundred people each—appear to be 'quietly holding their own.'" Arthur P. Sorensen, Jr., "South American Indian Linguistics at the Turn of the Seventies," in *Peoples and Cultures of Native South America*, ed. Daniel R. Gross (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday/The Natural History Press, 1973), p. 313.

easily recognizable geographic and culture areas,³ and discuss some of the major developments in our knowledge of their mythology since the completion of the *Handbook of South American Indians*.⁴

The decision to take the *Handbook* as a point of reference is not an entirely arbitrary one. Its compilation took place during the first years of the Second World War, digesting materials that represented research carried out mainly since the end of the nineteenth century.⁵

³ Among the first essays toward a scientifically based culture area map of South America are those of W. Schmidt, "Kulturreise und Kulturschichten in Südamerika" (*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, vol. 45, pp. 1014-1130, Berlin, 1913), which takes into consideration mythology. His conclusions are today considered obsolete. Clark Wissler (1917, 1938) broke up the continent into the following culture areas: Antilles, Chibcha, Inca, Amazonas, and (odd as it may seem) Guanaco, the last mentioned comprising most of the present territory of Argentina and Uruguay. Today the most influential classifications are those of J. M. Cooper (1925, 1941, 1942), who divided South America into sierral, silval, and marginal areas, and J. H. Steward, editor of the *Handbook of South American Indians* (1946, 1949), who added the Circum Caribbean area concept to Cooper's classification. G. M. Murdock (1951) has refined these maps by proposing 24 culture areas. G. R. Willey, *An Introduction to American Archeology*, vol. 2, *South America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1971) reproduces Cooper's, Steward's, and Murdock's maps, and briefly discusses them. He also proposes another division, based on archeological categories. Murdock's classification, useful as a filing device for the Human Relations Area Files, has been criticized by J. H. Rowe in his review of Murdock's *Outlines of South American Cultures* (*American Antiquity*, vol. 18, 3, pp. 279-280, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1953). Rowe rejects the culture area idea as theoretically unsound and misleading in practice. In this article we use it as a classificatory term based on well-known geographic nomenclature. In the above-mentioned works of Alexander and Izquierdo Gallo the following divisions are used for the discussion of the myths: Alexander—the Antilles, the Andean North, the Andean South, the Tropical Forests (the Orinoco and Guiana), the Tropical Forests (the Amazon and Brazil), and the Pampas to the Land of Fire. Izquierdo Gallo—the Caribbean, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, Brazil, Gran Chaco, and the Far South (which stands for Guaraní, Araucanian, Patagonian, and Fuegian). An overall map based on mythological categories remains to be drawn.

⁴ Edited by Julian H. Steward (Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 143. Vol. 1, 1946; vol. 2, 1946; vol. 3, 1948; vol. 4, 1948; vol. 5, 1949; vol. 6, 1950; vol. 7 [Index], 1959).

⁵ The chief contributor to the *Handbook* was Alfred Métraux (1902-1963), who had an unsurpassed knowledge of South American ethnography in general, and of the religions and mythologies in particular. At his death Claude Levi-Strauss wrote: "Alfred Métraux represented the most intimate alliance that has doubtless existed of a living ethnographic experience and a historical scholarship that let no document or source pass unheeded. Nobody among us will ever attain the richness of his learning and his memory" ("Necrologie," *Journal de la Société des Americanistes*, vol. 52, p. 301, Paris, 1963).

After World War II several important changes occurred in the sciences of man, substantially affecting our knowledge of the mythology of contemporary indigenous peoples. The following are the most significant. (1) The use of tape recorders to document the oral traditions that are the natural vehicle of myths. (2) The increasing number of scientifically trained linguists who have been able to transcribe, analyze, and translate aboriginal myths, or check on the translations made by native bilingual informants. (3) The waxing number of those informants who are now ready to volunteer their cooperation and can assist in presenting and interpreting the myths according to the native's point of view. (4) A better understanding of the role of myth in the life of aborigines, and thereby a greater respect for stories that were formerly considered as figments of a childish imagination, or worse. (5) The increased prestige of myth as a subject of research in literary, psychological, philosophical, sociological, anthropological, artistic, and religious studies, especially as such studies constitute an integrating approach to culture and symbolism.

As a result of all these factors, in the last few decades there has been a spate of publications dealing with the myths of contemporary South American Indians. This fact makes it necessary to revise the idea that mythology is a thing of the past, that Latin American Indian literatures are a chapter of Pre-Columbian cultures, and that the ancient traditions have almost completely died out or have been altered beyond recognition by Western influences. A new picture of the native South America emerges.

In many of the general works of South American mythology the Andean civilizations, especially the Chibcha and the Inca, have received a far lengthier treatment than the other aboriginal cultures, which are lumped together under the names of "Tropical Forest Tribes" and "Marginal Tribes." Work done in the field after the Second World War, however, has included both contemporary inhabitants of the Andes and the peoples of other South American areas. We are now in possession of mythical texts that significantly enlarge our appreciation of mythology in all areas. While archeology has revealed the importance of the pre-Inca civilizations of the Andes, whose art abounds in mythological allusions that are difficult to understand because we lack contemporaneous written documents, ethnography has enriched our libraries with many accounts of myths from contemporary "primitive"

societies. The mythological picture of South America is no longer dominated by the great ancient civilizations of the Andes and the work of Spanish and mestizo writers of the Colonial period, as the following discussion will show.⁶

The Caribbean

The Caribbean area is generally considered to be related to South America because the indigenous population of the islands was Arawak or Carib, both counting among the most extensive linguistic families of northern and central South America. Since the Indians of the Antilles were the first to be exterminated by the Spaniards, our knowledge of their mythology is bound to the reports of the early chroniclers and missionaries. While ethnographic work can no longer be undertaken in this area, new editions of old documents⁷ and fresh studies have been done since World War II, illuminating key aspects of Caribbean

⁶ The volume translated as *Pre-Columbian American Religions* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969; originally published in *Die Religionen der Menschheit* series [Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1961]) allot's more space to "Primitive South America and the West Indies" (by Otto Zerries) than to "South Central America and the Andean Civilization," an unusual but reasonable apportionment.

⁷ The diaries and related documents of Columbus have been newly translated into English and annotated by Samuel Eliot Morison: *Documents on the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (New York: The Heritage Press, 1964). Bartolomé de Las Casas's history of the Indies, the first of its kind, published only after 300 years after the author's death, has been edited twice after 1950: *Historia de las Indias*, edición de Agustín Millares Carlo y estudio preliminar de Lewis Hanke (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1951), and *Obras escogidas*, vol. 1: *Historia de las Indias*, texto fijado por Juan Pérez de Tudela y Emilio López Oto (Madrid: Atlas, 1957). The second edition has a preliminary study by Juan Pérez de Tudela Bueso. The *Brevissima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, first printed in Seville, 1552, has been reprinted in facsimile with other short treatises of Las Casas originally in Spanish or in Latin: *Tratados* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2 vols. 1965). On facing pages the Spanish texts are reproduced in modern transcription by Juan Pérez de Tudela Bueso, the Latin ones in Spanish translation by Agustín Millares Carlo and Rafael Moreno, with preliminary studies by Lewis Hanke and Manuel Giménez Fernández. There is also a new Spanish translation of the decades of *De Orbe Novo* by Peter Martyr of Angleria (whose name has been spelled in many ways): *Décadas del Nuevo Mundo, por Pedro Martir de Angleria, primer cronista de Indias* (México: José Porrua e Hijos, vol. 1, 1964; vol. 2, 1965). The translation from the Latin by Agustín Millares Carlo is accompanied by a study and appendices by Edmundo O'Gorman.

mythology and religion. One of the best is Fernando Ortiz's monograph on the myths and symbols of the hurricane, which he traces in detail through the Antilles and South America. As this is a study in comparative mythology and religion, the author also pursues his subject in Mesoamerica, North America, and even in the Old World.⁸ The chief merit of his book, however, lies in well-knit reasonings and plausible suggestions connecting the symbols of the spiral and the sigmoid, which appear mostly in sculpture and the dance, to the figures of the Antillean gods.

The mythological texts of the Caribbean area used by Ortiz proceed mostly from Ramón Pané's report on the antiquities of the Taino-speaking Indians.⁹ The same source has inspired José Juan Arrom to make a comparative study of the pre-Hispanic mythology and arts of the Antilles.¹⁰ Arrom's first purpose was to investigate the probable meanings of the names of the gods and other mythic beings as reported by Pané. Since no linguistic documents of the Taino language have survived, it has been impossible to analyze those names directly. But Taino belongs to the Arawak family, and we do have vocabularies, grammars, and other scientific tools for the study of languages belonging to this family, as the Arawak proper, and the Guajiro. By comparing the gods' names as recorded by Pané with the spellings given by such early chroniclers as Las Casas, Angleria, and Oviedo, Arrom has been able to sift his materials critically, and to apply methods of structural linguistics with rewarding results. Although obscurities remain, the names of most gods now appear related to symbols, functions, and attributes that turn their formerly unintelligible cognomens into meaningful appellations. Comprehension of the god's names and characteristics has led to identification of many pre-Hispanic sculptures, kept in American and European museums, that because of their odd shapes had been regarded as objects of little aesthetic value. Interpreted as the figures of certain divine beings, these artistic creations of the Antillean aborigines acquire new significance.

⁸ Fernando Ortiz, *El huracán* (Méjico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1947).

⁹ A new critical edition of Pané's short treatise on the beliefs of the Indians of Hispaniola is available: "Relación acerca de las antigüedades de los indios," *el primer tratado escrito en América*, ed. Juan José Arrom (Méjico: Siglo XXI, 1974).

¹⁰ *Mitología y artes prehispánicas de las Antillas* (Méjico, Siglo XXI, 1975).

The Orinoco and Guiana

Directly south of the Caribbean area there are still numerous indigenous groups whose mythologies have received new or fuller treatment since the publication of the *Handbook*. These groups, living in the eastern region of Panama, the Goajira peninsula, the Orinoco basin, and Guiana, speak languages of the Arawak, Carib, and Chibcha families, or other tongues unrelated to known groups. Of the Arawak societies in this area the most important in number is the Goajiro, totaling about twenty-five thousand people. In the *Handbook*, the chapter on the Goajiro was written in part by the leading expert in South American mythology, Alfred Métraux, who in two final paragraphs devoted to religion and shamanism admitted that the Goajiro religion was still insufficiently known. Mythological aspects were included in the paragraph on religion, but no separate treatment was given to mythology. The *Handbook* also noted that studies of the Guajiro language were also quite imperfect. This situation has now changed, especially in the field of oral literatures. The mythic world of the Guajiro is now being illuminated from within both by experienced ethnologists, among whom Michel Perrin leads the way, and at least one bilingual Guajiro, Miguel Angel Jusayú, who writes in his native language and in Spanish. The work of Perrin in particular takes us into the Goajiro world of myth, where death and the voyage to the other world are leading motifs.¹¹

¹¹ María Manuela de Cora, in her book *Kuai-Mare, Mitos aborígenes de Venezuela* (Madrid: Océanida, 1957; 2nd ed.: Monte Avila, 1972), included Goajiro myths told by Luis Antonio López, a native informant. Fray Cesáreo de Armellada and Carmela Bentivenga de Napolitano reproduce several Goajiro myths from different sources in their *Litteratures indígenas venezolanas* (Caracas: Monte Avila, 1975). The most important study of Goajiro mythology, in the context of the religious and cultural experience of the tribe, is Michel Perrin's *Le chemin des Indiens morts* (Paris: Payot, 1976), in which the texts can be read in French. The appended bibliography records about ten other studies in Goajiro mythology. The short stories by Miguel Angel Jusayú, *Jukújálairrua Wayú/Relatos goajiros* (Caracas: Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, 1975), are printed in Goajiro and Spanish on facing pages, an unusual presentation of Latin American literature. The atmosphere of Jusayú's stories is not unlike the dream world of Goajiro myths. Jusayú, whose eyes became useless at 13, has an extraordinary power of vision as a writer. He has also recently published a grammar and a dictionary of the Goajiro language. Earlier collections are Milcías Chaves, "Mitos leyendas y cuentos de la Guajira" (*Boletín de*

To the southwest of the Guajiro the Chibcha-speaking Kogi, or Kagaba, are concentrated on the northern slopes of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. Willard Z. Park's detailed description in the *Handbook* recognized the complexity and importance of Kogi religion. Relying on the compilation of tales made by K. Th. Preuss,¹² Park indicated that they dealt largely with religious affairs. Park also said that extensive collections of the myths of the Sierra Nevada remained to be made. A few years later Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff published an excellent ethnographic monograph on these Indians, based on extensive field work done in 1946, 1947, and 1948.¹³ The chapters on religion and mythology supply a superb introduction to the Kogi spiritual world as well as a wealth of texts (in Spanish translation) presenting a coherent world picture steeped in some basic cosmological beliefs and ideas related to rites of fertility. The scarcity of footnotes to the mythic texts is compensated for by the explanations proffered in the chapter on religion. This is an outstanding monograph where the mythological material is well integrated with the rest of the anthropological descriptions. We only wish we had more books like this on South American Indian societies.

Although important collections of myths of the Taulipang and Arekuna, who speak a language of the Caribbean family, were available at the time of the *Handbook*'s writing, its contributors did not make much use of them. In fact, the information it offers on Caribbean mythology is rather scanty. Fortunately, we now have first-hand studies of these and other Caribbean-speaking aborigines of Venezuela, Colombia, and Guiana. The Taulipang, Arekuna, and Kamarakoto are at present commonly designated after the word by which they call them-

Arqueología, vol. 2, pp. 305-331, Bogotá, 1946-1947); and Ramón Paz, *Mitos, leyendas y cuentos de los indios guajiros* (Caracas: Instituto Agrario Nacional, 1972).

¹² Konrad Theodor Preuss, "Forschungsreise zu den Kágaba-Indianer der Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in Kolumbien. Beobachtungen, Textaufnahmen und linguistische Studien," (*Anthropos*, vols. 14-22, San Gabriel-Mödling bei Wien, 1910-1927). Preuss's studies of the Kogi are unique because of the religious and mythic texts in the Kogi language and German translation. See also Milcíades Chaves, "Mitología kágaba (*Boletín de Arqueología*, vol. 1, pp. 423-520, Bogotá, 1946-1947).

¹³ *Los Kogi. Una tribu de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia* (vol. 1: *Revista del Instituto Etnológico Nacional*, vol. 4, Bogotá, 1949-1950; vol. 2, Bogotá: Editorial Igueima, 1951).

selves, i.e., *Pemón*; and their mythology can be studied in connection with their religion and magic on a much firmer basis than before. Fray Cesáreo de Armellada, who has spent more than thirty years in the jungle with the Pemón and published a grammar, a dictionary, and ethnographic studies related to these groups, has also compiled and commented upon their oral literature. He has shown at some length that certain myths, called *tarén*, are recited in the form of spells in order to produce or counteract evils.¹⁴

Another Caribbean-speaking group of Venezuela, the "true Carib" Kariña, related to the Kalina of Guiana, have been successfully studied by Marc de Civrieux, who has devoted a most interesting book to their religion and magic. The volume includes ten myths as told by recent informants.¹⁵ Among them we find motifs of worldwide diffusion, as the deluge, and others more specific to South America, particularly the Carib tribes, as the twin children of the Jaguar. Civrieux has again discussed Kariña oral literature in another stimulating book where the Makiritare are also introduced as examples of the savage's adaptation to nature.¹⁶

What in 1950 appeared as dismembered fragments of the oral literature of the Yecuana or Makiritare, another Caribbean-speaking group of Venezuela, have now been presented by Civrieux as a coherent creation myth, closely related to Makiritare religion and social structure.¹⁷ Myth becomes legend as it reflects events of the actual history of the Makiritare through their contacts with the Spanish and the Dutch in the eighteenth century. The struggle and final victory of the Makiritare shaman Mahaiwadi against the Fañuro contrasts with the

¹⁴ *Gramática y diccionario de la lengua pemón arekuna, taurepán, kamarakoto* (Caracas: R. A. Artes Gráficas, vol. 1, *Gramática*, 1943; vol. 2, *Diccionario*, 1944); *Cómo son los indios pemones de la Gran Sabana* (Caracas: Editorial Elite, 1946); *Taurón Pantón: Cuentos y leyendas de los indios pemón* (Caracas: Ministerio de Educación, 1964); *Pementón Taremuru: Invocaciones mágicas de los indios pemón* (Caracas: Universidad Católica Andres Bello, 1972); and *Taurón Pantón II: Así dice el cuento (ibid.*, 1973).

¹⁵ *Religión y magia karina* (Caracas: Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, 1974).

¹⁶ *El hombre silvestre ante la naturaleza* (Caracas: Monte Ávila, 1974).

¹⁷ *Watuna: Mitología makiritare* (Caracas: Monte Ávila, 1970). See also J. M. Cruxent, "Guanari, dios bueno makiritare" (*Boletín Indigenista Venezolano*, vol. 1, pp. 325-328, Caracas, 1953). Daniel de Barandiarán, "El habitado entre los indios Yekuana" (*Antropológica*, vol. 16, pp. 1-95, Caracas, 1966), contains interesting references to makiritare mythic cosmology.

relations of the Makiritare with Iaranavi. The latter represents the image of the first Spaniards with whom they came into contact: friendly, industrious, rich in strange and marvelous merchandise. Fañuro, on the contrary, is an evil demon who eats men. Fañuro is the invading Spaniard. (Español → Pañoro → Fañuro.)

Another Caribbean-speaking group whose mythology has only recently been made public through a good collection of stories is the Yupa (or Yukpa, or Yuko), who live on both sides of the border of Venezuela and Colombia, south of the area occupied by the Goajiro. Johannes Wilbert, who collected the stories in 1960, has introduced the English translations with a study of the Yupa world-view and culture; he has also provided analyses of motif contents and other useful research materials.¹⁸ The tales give us, among other things, an idea of how the Yupa see their own origins and the origins of the whites, whose enmity is explained as the result of the Yupa's destruction of the magic stone through which the first ancestor of the whites had been conceived. Other myths reveal the origins of the moon, the Milky Way, fire, and staple plants. There are also tales of death from a flood, from hunger, and from cold. In another story a dead man returns to take his beloved to the other world. She makes the dangerous trip and comes back safely, but gets drunk at a feast and tells the living all she saw in the other world. Aware of her indiscretion, she kills herself in sorrow.

Of the neighboring Motilones, who also speak a Caribbean language, we do not have a comparable source book or study of their mythology, but there are indications that work has already been started in order to fill this gap.¹⁹

Of the Caribbean-speaking Yabarana, the *Handbook* could only say there were twenty or thirty along the middle of the Ventuari River, and that they spoke two different dialects. Field work done for three

¹⁸ *Yupa Folktales* (Los Angeles: University of California, Latin American Center, 1974).

¹⁹ The recent book by Angelo Neglia and Olson Bruce, *Una raza bravía: Estudio socio-antropológico de los indios motilones* (Bogotá: Instituto de Desarrollo de la Comunidad, n.d.), includes a few myths, mostly fragmentary, dealing with the creation of man, the animals, and a white culture hero. In other stories the spirit of evil represents the whites. Olson Bruce, a Norwegian linguist working among the Motilone as a missionary, may still come up with a sound collection of mythic texts.

weeks by Johannes Wilbert in 1958 yielded a number of *itune*, or old stories, from which an outline of their mythology could be attempted.²⁰ These stories tell about the birth of the moon and the stars and of other cosmological accidents, including the deluge; but the most important story recorded deals with the origin of the sun in the sky. The more lengthy tales refer to the adventures of two primeval brothers, Mayowoca and Ochi, who provide an abdomen, legs, and feet to the first human couple, who had only the upper half of the body. In exchange Mayawoca obtains the precious sun-bird, which his younger brother carries in a basket. Although warned not to open the lid, he of course cannot resist his curiosity and the magic bird flies away. Many other adventures follow, which are here briefly told but were probably the subject of a large number of separate myths belonging to the cycle of Mayowoca and Ochi. It is possible that further field research will bring forth a wider supply of Yabarana stories.

Other threatened groups living on the eastern affluents of the Orinoco in Venezuela and Colombia have been insufficiently studied from the point of view of mythology. The *Handbook*²¹ says that nothing is known of the religion of the Guahibo, except that these tribes believed in the devil, and gives no hint of their mythology. Since then some aspects of Guahibo religion and mythology have become known. Robert V. Morey and Donald T. Metzger, who spent many months with several groups in 1965 and 1966, report on the existence of Kúwai, a creator god who is also the leader of culture heroes. There are also numerous demons and spirits.²² Moreover, in a monograph on the Cuiva (or Wajemonä), a Guahibo group living in Venezuela on the Capanaro River near the border of Colombia, Walter Coppens includes a brief chapter on religion and mythology with a few myths told in Spanish by a young bilingual Guahibo.²³ In them

²⁰ *Zur Kenntnis der Yabarana* (Köln: Naturwissenschaftliche Gesellschaft La Salle, Caracas, 1959). In "Mitos de los indios yabarana" (*Antropológica*, no. 5, Caracas, 1958) Wilbert had given the texts in Spanish with a short comparative commentary.

²¹ Vol. 4, p. 455.

²² *The Guahibo: People of the Savanna* (*Acta Ethnologica et Linguistica* no. 31, Wien, 1974; Series Americana 7). See chapter 8: "Life, Death, and the Supernatural," particularly "Pantheon," pp. 107-108.

²³ *Los cuiva de San Esteban de Capanaro: Ensayo de antropología aplicada* (Caracas: Fundacion La Salle de Ciencias Naturales, 1975).

we meet Namonä (or Nakwone), who created himself and then the earth, the rivers, fish and animals, and the *jiwi*, one of whom discovered fire but because he did not want to share it, was killed by the other *jiwi*, who at their death turned into different animals. Other stories introduce us to Cuiva cosmology, the deluge, more culture heroes, foreign peoples, and shamanism. Most of the tales, unfortunately, seem to have been told in a rather fragmentary manner.

The Warrau, who live on the Orinoco delta, have been in contact with other tribes, with the whites, and even with Negroes for a long time, but still preserve their language and oral literature. Many Warrau myths were included by Walter E. Roth in his classic book on animism and folklore,²⁴ and Paul Kirchhoff, writing for the *Handbook*, devoted a short section of a rather desultory kind to Warrau religion and mythology. In the last twenty years, however, the publication of Warrau texts and translations in articles and books, as well as studies of Warrau life, culture, religion, art, music, and song, have provided a detailed image of their spiritual life, and particularly of their vocal expression, where myths and other stories represent a large measure of the available printed work. As a result of the labors of Basilio María de Barral,²⁵ Johannes Wilbert,²⁶ Henry S. Osborne,²⁷ and a few others, it is today possible to study Warrau mythology in its cultural context. The materials already published, whether in Warrau with Spanish or English translation or just in Spanish, usually consist of a variety of texts where it would be necessary to segregate the

²⁴ *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folklore of the Guiana Indians* (Washington: Thirteenth Annual Report of the U.S. Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908-1909, 1915).

²⁵ *Guarao Guarata: Lo que cuentan los indios guaraos* (Caracas: Fundación Creole, 1959); *Los indios guarauños y su cancionero: Historia, religión y alma lírica* (Madrid: CSIC, 1964); and *Guarao A-Ribu: Literatura de los indios guarao* (Caracas: Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, 1969).

²⁶ *Warao Oral Literature* (Caracas: Fundación La Salle de Ciencias Naturales, 1964); and *Folk Literature of the Warao Indians. Narrative Material and Motif Content* (Los Angeles: University of California, Latin American Center, 1970).

²⁷ "Textos folklóricos en Guarao" I (*Boletín Indigenista Venezolano*, vols. 3-5, pp. 163-170, Caracas 1958); II (*ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 157-173, 1958); "Textos folklóricos Warao III" (*Antropológica*, vol. 9, pp. 21-38, Caracas, 1960); IV (*ibid.*, vol. 10, pp. 71-80, 1960); and V (*ibid.*, vol. 27, pp. 24-43, 1970). Warrau myths have been reconstructed in Tahera Daisi, "Siete mitos guarao" (*Revista Nacional de Cultura*, vol. 23, pp. 95-124, Caracas, 1961).

myths from other literary pieces in order to study them as testimonies of religious literature. It would also be proper to investigate the diffusion of certain myths in the Warrau area and establish which of them represent older traditions and which seem to be the product of later contacts. What we have, however, suffices to reconstruct a colorful cosmological structure of several layers, with a blue sea in the sky duplicating the watery ways of the Warrau on earth, and a host of supernaturals presided over by a supreme being. All kinds of mythical adventures take place against this magic backdrop. While more editions of texts would always be welcome, a systematic, phenomenological, structural study of Warrau mythology is now in order.

Of the indigenous groups living to the southeast of the Warrau, straddling the border of Venezuela, Guiana, and Brazil, as the Caribbean-speaking Makushi²⁸ or the Arawak-speaking Wapishana,²⁹ we have seen some improvement upon the little we knew about their mythologies. An excellent study was made of the spiritual culture of the Caribbean-speaking Waiwai, who live a little farther to the southeast in Guiana and Brazil, shortly before their disintegration under missionary impact.³⁰ Aware that this was an impending event, Niels Fock, who participated in the Danish ethnographic expedition of 1954-1955, concentrated his efforts on the more threatened institutions, among them religion and mythology. Ten myths, including the creation story, are presented in English preceded by a discussion of basic religious beliefs (souls, spirits, divine beings) and followed by explanations of key Waiwai terms used in the myths and a general interpretation of each from a sociological point of view. This is an indispensable book for the study of Waiwai mythology, both because of the mythic texts and the explanatory materials that accompany them.

²⁸ On Makushi mythology we have: Alcuin Mayer, "Lendas Macuxis" (*Journal de la Société des Americanistes*, vol. 40, pp. 67-87, Paris, 1940); Edson Soares Diniz, "Duas lendas Macuxi" (*Revista de Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros*, vol. 3, pp. 171-174, São Paulo, 1968); and "Mitos dos indios Makuxi" (*Journal de la Société des Americanistes*, vol. 70, pp. 75-103, 1971). The last-mentioned article contains materials that could be described as folktales rather than myths.

²⁹ On Vapishana mythology: Mauro Wirth, "A mitologia dos Vapidiana do Brasil" (*Sociologia*, vol. 5, pp. 257-268, São Paulo, 1943), and "Lendas dos indios Vapidiana" (*Revista do Museu Paulista*, no. 5, vol. 4, pp. 165-216, São Paulo, 1950). Wirth went in search of the Pakahas-Novas in 1950 and never returned.

³⁰ *Waiwai: Religion and Society of an Amazonian Tribe* (Copenhagen: The National Museum, 1963).

Great progress has also been made in our understanding of the Yanomamo (also called by slightly different names, as "Yanoama," and by quite dissimilar ones, as "Waica"), who inhabit Venezuelan and Brazilian territories between the Negro and the Branco rivers, south of the area occupied by the Makiritare and the Pemón. The Yanomamo, who speak a language not easily related to any other, were not mentioned in the *Handbook* by this or a similar name, and very little was said of them under the denominations of Waica, Shiriana, Guaharibo, and others, although their wild character was stressed. Today, by contrast, we have good ethnographic monographs on several Yanomamo groups, as well as linguistic studies by competent field researchers. The most relevant works for a study of Yanomamo mythology are the comprehensive dissertation by Otto Zerries³¹ and Jacques Lizot's³² collection of tales. Zerries, whose studies in the South American Indians' conceptions of nature spirits are well known,³³ provides a chapter on Yanomamo mythology and explanations about their main religious beliefs (divine beings, spirits, souls), as well as about tabu, ritual, and the use of magic plants. Zerries gives a rather abbreviated version of the myths but discusses them at some length from the point of view of motif content and geographic diffusion. Lizot, on the other hand, presents close to eighty stories, many of them mythical. In many cases he gives more than one version of the same myth. Footnotes help with difficult allusions, but the author has abstained from commenting on the texts. Incidentally, the only edition we have been able to consult is a too literal retranslation from the French into Spanish, which reads as if the Yanomamo spoke in Gallicisms. In spite of these shortcomings, Zerries's and Lizot's works afford a sound basis for our study of Yanomamo mythology. We now know that the wild, fierce Yanomamo, like most "primitives," have a wonderful oral

³¹ *Waika: Die Kulturgechichtliche Stellung der Waika-Indianer des oberen Orinoco im Rahmen der Völkerkunde Sudamerikas* (München: Klaus Renner, 1964).

³² *El hombre de la pantorrilla preñada y otros mitos yanomami* (Caracas: Fundación La Salle de Ciencias Naturales, 1975). Lizot's book *Le cercle des feux: Faits et dits des Indiens yanomami* (Paris: Du Seuil, 1976) deals with many aspects of Yanomamo everyday life and culture, including their ideas and behavior toward the *hekura*, or spirits, but does not include myths.

³³ *Wild- und Buschgeister in Südamerika* (Weisbaden: Franz Steiner, 1954). Also: "Wilbeuter und Jägertum in Südamerika—Ein Überblick" (*Paideuma*, vol. 2, pp. 98-114, Wiesbaden, 1962).

literature. There is still, however, ample room for more detailed investigation of these survivors of El Dorado and their myths.³⁴

The Western Amazon

This is probably the South American area with the largest number of inadequately known Indian languages and cultures. It includes sizable jungle regions of Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, watered by the big rivers that drain into the Amazon, and many smaller affluents. Although important compilations of myths and related studies of the Witoto³⁵ and Jivaro³⁶ Indians were published between the world wars, we do not yet have reliable monographs on many of the aboriginal societies of this area.

The most important contribution to the mythology of an Indian group in the Western Amazon consists of two books by Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, who collected new texts from an exceptionally gifted Desana informant and related them to the general culture of the Desana, in particular to their visions under the effect of narcotic

³⁴ Other Yanomamo mythic tales can be found in Hans Becher, "Algumas notas sobre a religião e a mitologia dos Surára" (*Revista do Museu Paulista*, n.s., vol. 11, pp. 99-107, São Paulo, 1959); and in Daniel de Barandiarán, "Vida y muerte entre los indios Sanema-Yanoama" (*Antropológica*, no. 21, pp. 3-65, particularly pp. 4-12, Caracas, 1967). There are brief references to Yanomamo cosmology and mythology in Napoleon A. Chagnon, *Yanomamö: The Fierce People* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), pp. 44-48; and in William J. Smole, *The Yanoama Indians: A Cultural Geography* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976), pp. 23-24. Many mythic narratives in Spanish are interspersed in different chapters of Luis Cocco, *Iyéwelteri: Quince años entre los Yanomamos* (Caracas: Escuela Técnica Popular Don Bosco, 1972). A few, in German, are in Gottfried Polykrates, *Waranaveteri und Pukimapueteri: Zwei Yanonami-Stämme Nordwestbrasiliens* (Copenhagen: National Museum, 1969). Ettore Biocca, *Viaggi tra gli indi; Alto Rio Negro, Alto Orinoco* (Roma: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, vol. 2, 1966), reproduces Yanomamo myths from other sources and adds some more (see especially p. 497 for further references).

³⁵ Konrad Theodor Preuss, *Religion und Mythologie der Witoto. Textaufnahmen und Beobachtungen bei einem Indianerstamm in Kolumbien, Südamerika* (Göttingen, Leipzig: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, J. C. Hinrich, 2 vols. in 1, 1921-1923).

³⁶ Rafael Karsten, *The Head-Hunters of the Western Amazonas: The Life and Culture of the Jivaro Indians of Western Ecuador and Peru* (Helsingfors: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Literarum, vol. 7, no. 1, 1935), pp. 513-535. Also: M. W. Stirling, *Historical and Ethnographical Material of the Jivaro Indians* (Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 117, 1938), pp. 124-129.

drugs.³⁷ The Desana live in the Vaupés River area and speak an eastern Tukano language. Their creation story tells about the original strife between two brothers, Sun and Moon. Sun lived incestuously with his daughter, and Moon tried to make love to her, an act for which he was punished by Sun who took away his large feather crown. Since then Moon has been deprived of it and both brothers live apart. Moreover, with the power of his yellow light Sun created the Universe and everything that is in it. The story unfolds, giving details about the structure of the world, the creation of animals of all kinds, and of the tribes. Then there is the story of the Snake-Canoe, the origins of Night, the distribution of the tribes, and many others which it would be impossible to relate here. The whole affords an impressive narrative of the origins of the main elements of Desana life and culture. In his analyses Reichel-Dolmatoff underlines the significance of the cosmological and sexual symbolism that pervades the myths, religious rites, and shamanistic visions of the Desana, where the Jaguar plays a leading role akin to that of the Sun in the sky and the shaman in the community. Although further field studies might enlarge our knowledge of Tukano mythology, on which the *Handbook* has very little to say, the value of Reichel-Dolmatoff's investigations can hardly be overstated.

Another Tukano group, the Barasana, is not so much as mentioned in the *Handbook*, at least by that name. Its mythology, however, is the subject of Alfonso Torres Laborde's doctoral dissertation.³⁸ Torres spent six weeks in the field on the Piriparana River, and was able to obtain good recordings of formerly unknown myths containing, nevertheless, some motifs of wide diffusion. Although no original texts are offered, the Spanish translations done by bilingual informants are useful enough. Also very helpful are the author's explanatory notes that relate many points in the myths to ritual and other aspects of Barasana

³⁷ *Amazonian Cosmos: The Sexual and Religious Symbolism of the Tukano Indians* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), and *The Shaman and the Jaguar* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975). See also Marcos Fulop, "Aspectos de la cultura tucana: Cosmogonía" (*Revista Colombiana de Antropología*, vol. 3, pp. 123-164, Bogotá, 1954) and "Aspectos de la cultura tucana: Mitología" (*ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 337-373, 1956).

³⁸ *Mito y cultura entre los barasana, un grupo indígena tukano del Vaupés* (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 1969). Ettore Biocca, *Viaggi tra gli indi*, vol. 1, 1965, gives a large number of myths of the Tukano, Tariana, Baniwa, and Makú, from other sources or from his own transcriptions.

culture. As in the case of the Desana, sexual symbolism plays a large role within the framework of a sacred cosmology.

Quite a few people have heard of the Jivaro because samples of their shrunken trophy-heads (or similar, fraudulent ones) are exhibited in many ethnographic museums. Besides, the *Handbook* has a good section on these peoples of the Peruvian and Ecuadorian Montaña, including a brief description of their mythology. The chapter was written by Julian N. Steward (editor of the *Handbook*) and Alfred Métraux, at that time the leading expert in South American religions and mythologies. Since then, the inroads of civilization on the Jivaro have profoundly altered the patterns of their life. In the aftermath of this process missionaries and some aborigines are making an effort to salvage what can still be preserved of the old traditions, among which myths hold a focal position. Father S. Pellizzaro has begun to publish a veritable encyclopedia of the Jivaro, whom he calls Shuar, which will contain at least a dozen volumes devoted to myths and rites. Three volumes have already appeared: one with stories related to charms to propitiate the spirits; another being the cycle of Etsa, a hero and protector of the Jivaro; and the third the cycle of Shakaim, who actually is Etsa acting in affairs of agriculture and family life.³⁹ The stories are presented in the Jivaro language with a word-for-word translation and a free version into Spanish. Since the encyclopedia will include a Shuar-Spanish dictionary and other linguistic tools, we may soon be in possession of an unprecedented body of Jivaro literature and adequate means to study it. When the series of mythic and ritualistic texts is completed, our ideas about Jivaro mythology will have to be revised in the light of the new materials at hand.⁴⁰

Another contribution to our knowledge of Jivaro mythology has been made by José Luis Jordana Laguna, a schoolteacher who collected a large number of tales among his students and neighbors. The end product of his labors is a book with nearly seventy stories of varying length on many subjects, a large number of which can be

³⁹ *Mitos y ritos para propiciar a los espíritus* (Morona Santiago, Ecuador: Centro de Documentación, Investigaciones y Publicaciones Mundo Shuar, n.d. [1977]); *Etsa, defensor de los shuar* (*ibid.*, n.d.); and *Shakaim* (*ibid.*, n.d.).

⁴⁰ Also by Siro M. Pellizzaro, "La realidad del mito de Nunki" (*Boletín de la Academia Nacional de La Historia*, vol. 57, pp. 147-159, Quito, Ecuador, 1974). It contains Shuar text, literal and free Spanish translations, and commentary.

considered myths.⁴¹ The texts have been freely edited by the compiler for clarity's sake and furnished with footnotes to explain words associated with the ecology of the area. As most of these tales come from the Aguaruna who traditionally lived in the southernmost part of the Jivaro habitat, while the Shuar occupied the northernmost positions, the collections made by Pellizzaro in Ecuador and Jordana Laguna in Perú complement each other.⁴²

In his chapter for the *Handbook* on the tribes of the Jurua-Purús, Métraux dealt at some length with the Cashinawa, a group speaking a language of the Pano family. For the mythology he could draw on the already classic study by João Capistrano d'Abreu, full of mythic texts in the original, accompanied by Portuguese translations. Within the last twenty-five years, however, more than two hundred Cashinawa (perhaps one fourth of the whole population) have moved west and live in Peruvian territory, where they have been the subject of close study by a linguist, André Marcel d'Ans. An outcome of his research is a noteworthy volume presenting in translation a wide range of Cashinawa oral literature.⁴³ Here we find, with important difference, myths we had already read in Abreu's book. In addition to his collection, for which he depended heavily on a particularly well-qualified informant, Ans has written a lively introduction. Beyond providing the relevant ethnographic background in a nutshell, this contains uncommonly sensible comments on the value of aboriginal literature and culture, the relations between native and missionary religions, and other important subjects. The translated pieces are presented under the headings of myths proper; wonderful stories; feats of sorcerers, charms, and fabulous beings; moral and immoral stories; and historical myths. By myths proper Ans understands tales of a symbolic content that explain how the natural and the social worlds came to be, and expound, at least by implication, the need to behave ourselves so that we do not break the basic prevailing balance. Since the author foresees

⁴¹ *Mitos e historias aguarunas y huambisas de la selva del Alto Marañón* (Lima: Retablo de Papel, 1974). Foreword by Stéfano Varese.

⁴² More Jivaro myths are in Mario Forno, "Racconti e canti del gruppo Ghivaro: Ecuador e Perù: (*Annali del Pontificio Museo Missionario Etnologico, già Lateranensi*, vol. 37, pp. 561-591, Città del Vaticano, 1973).

⁴³ *La verdadera Biblia de los cashinagua: Mítos, leyendas y tradiciones de la Selva peruana* (Lima: Mosca Azul, 1975).

one or two more volumes of similar Cashinawa stories, we may still be treated to more documents of this mythology.

Continuing our march south and passing in silence by a number of tribes whose mythologies have not been the object of recent research or have never been studied at all, we meet another Arawak-speaking group, the Campa, on which interesting work has been published in the sixties and the seventies. On the basis of unprinted Campa stories transcribed and translated into English by Willard Kindberg, Fernando Torre López has written a study of Campa religion that contributes to the interpretation of the tribe's ritual through an examination of its mythology.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, the author's scholastic method has obtruded between his subject and his own exposition so heavily that in order to follow the argument the reader is obliged to plod in a sea of quotations from a variety of writers among whom the favorite one is Gerardus van der Leeuw. A more straightforward presentation of the myths and their exegesis would have provided more pleasurable reading without sacrifice of scholarship.

A fundamental study of the Campa has been written by Stéfano Varese, supplying us with an up-to-date ethnographic introduction, an ethnohistoric essay describing the Spanish and Peruvian contacts with these Indians, and an interpretation of the aboriginal world-view.⁴⁵ The third point is elaborated as a comment on two myths collected by Varese during his stay among the Pajonal people, and here set forth in his Spanish translation. The first deals with the origins of the whites. It tells how the Viracocha (Europeans) slew all the Campa except one, a shaman who later obtained a magic herb from the friendly vulture. The shaman was able to kill the Viracocha, who were then cooked and eaten by the vulture. The second myth is about Pachacamáite (father and god), owner of all good things, especially modern hunting weapons coveted by the Campa. According to the story, in older times they could make the difficult journey to Pachacamáite and obtain the good things they wanted. Now the whites have put obstacles in the river and it is no longer possible for the Campa to reach him. Pachacamáite gives the whites and the mestizos the weapons

⁴⁴ *Fenomenología religiosa de la tribu anti a campa, Amazonía peruana* (Cuernavaca, México; Centro Intercultural de Documentación, 1969).

⁴⁵ *La sal de los cerros: Una aproximación al mundo campa* (Lima: Retablo de Papel, 1973).

and tools needed by the Campa but the strangers say that they have to pay for them and are only willing to let the Campa have them at a price.

The last chapter of Varese's book contains an analysis and interpretation of the mythic texts we have just summarized. This is a brilliant exegesis in the wake of such masters of modern religious and mythological thought as Guénon, Coomaraswamy, Jung, van der Leeuw, Eliade, and Campbell. The field anthropologist and ethnohistorian becomes philosopher of man and culture as he expounds the destructive effects of white contacts with the sacred world of the Pajonal Campa. In the final pages Varese contrasts the secularized world of the whites (nature, labor, technology) and the transcendental meaning of every item in Campa culture. "To the Campa every object, be it ever so little, has a place in the universe. To act with it, on it, or by means of it, sets off a more general chain of events that affects the natural and the social order, in one word, the cosmic order."⁴⁶

The cosmology of the Campa is precisely the subject chosen by Gerald Weiss in order to formulate a general theory of cosmology.⁴⁷ Since a discussion of Weiss's main objective would land us in a field far beyond our present limits, we will only indicate his chief contributions to our knowledge of Campa mythology. Weiss, who spent thirty months among the Campa between 1960 and 1964, presents in the original language, accompanied by a word-for-word English translation, a number of Campa texts, the majority of which are myths. As the Campa do not believe that the universe has always been the same, a reason for the changes is provided by stories of transformations. Here Aviveri, the great supernatural transformer, plays a leading role. He turns his grandson Kiri into the pihuayo palm (*kiri*), and makes the Campa he encounters along his route into different things resembling them. Thus he transforms his sister's sons, who were

⁴⁶ Also by Stéfano Varese is "Dos versiones cosmogónicas campa: esbozo analítico" (*Revista del Museo Nacional*, vol. 36, pp. 164-177, Lima, 1970). In his commentary on the two cosmological texts translated into Spanish by bilingual informants, Varese emphasizes the idea of salvation through knowledge in Campa thought.

⁴⁷ "The Cosmology of the Campa Indians of Eastern Peru" (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 1969). This University of Michigan Ph.D. dissertation was re-elaborated and published as *Campa Cosmology: The World of a Forest Tribe in South America* (*Anthropological Papers of The American Museum of Natural History*, vol. 52, part 5, pp. 217-588, New York, 1975).

climbing his fruit trees in order to steal his fruit, into white monkeys, termite nests, and bees' nests, i.e., arboreal things or animals. Other myths explain certain natural phenomena by pointing out a mythological origin. For instance, the Campa notice that uncultivated papaya trees sometimes grow in their gardens. This is accounted for by telling the story of Oáti. It is said that when Oáti was a human person he asked his sister for seed to plant corn, which he obtained but did not sow. He wasted the seed by popping and gluttonously eating it. On being discovered by his sister he was so frightened that he became an *oáti*, the animal the Campa often see climbing the papaya trees. This tale is taken up again by Weiss in his discussion of several theories of myth. He first criticizes Radcliffe-Brown, Boas, and Malinowski. In contrast to Malinowski's views, according to which "savages" do not want explanations but justifications of their activities, Weiss holds that explanation is the prime function of mythology. Finally, Weiss engages Levi-Strauss's theory and practice of myth analysis. He proposes to follow the rules of Levi-Strauss's game in analyzing the myth of Oáti, and shows that while it is possible to dissect the story by assuming that it is generated out of its structure, and that it attempts to solve such oppositions as human and nonhuman, or culture and nature, it is more reasonable to follow the Campa mode of thought and consider that the myth was intended rather as an explanation of important or unusual features in their world. Weiss's monograph is an invaluable contribution to mythology, both by the new texts adduced and the interpretations offered. Even if we do not agree with some of his contentions, it must be acknowledged that the extent and depth of his research put us all in his debt.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ The Machiguenga, neighbors of the Campa sometimes considered to be closely related to them, have been presented in a rather unscholarly fashion by Andrés Ferrero, *Los machiguengas, tribu selvática del sur-oriente peruano* (Villanova, Pamplona: OPE, 1967), including references to their mythic world and a few stories (pp. 377-424). Gerhard Baer and Gisela Hertle, on the other hand, give the Machiguenga text, German translations, and analysis and commentary of two myths, one concerning a dead man who returned from under the earth, the other about a shaman's visit to the sky home of the vultures: "Zwei Matsigenka-Mythen: Versuch einer Analyse," in *Festschrift Otto Zerries* (Zürich: *Ethnologische Zeitschrift*, 1974), pp. 33-75.

Myths and observations on the mythic world of several Western Amazonian tribes (Yagua, Witoto, Bora, Ocaina, Shapra, Cashinawa, Shipibo, and Cashibo) can be found in Rafael Girard, *Indios selváticos de la Amazonía peruana*

The Central Andes

In the Central Andes the cultural upheaval brought about by the violent clash of two great civilizations, the Western Christian of Spain and the Andean led by the Inca, was more intense than anywhere else in South America owing to the size of populations involved, the extent of areas affected, and the long duration of the contact. Of course, the mythology of the Andean peoples has suffered considerably in the process, and this is reflected in the relevant chapters of the *Handbook*. In his masterful exposition of Inca culture at the time of the Spanish conquest, John Howland Rowe devoted five full pages to mythology, and made further reference to it in the section on literature.⁴⁹ In the next chapters George Kubler allotted only one page to the mythology of the Quechua in the Colonial world,⁵⁰ and Bernard Mishkin, writing on the contemporary Quechua, made no mention of myths, although no less than eight pages dealt with religious beliefs and fiestas.⁵¹ It would be a hasty conclusion, however, to think that the rich mythology of the ancient Andean peoples has all but disappeared.

An outcome of more recent research in the Andean cultures shows that Colonial documents presenting testimonies of native individuals can be read not only as sources of Spanish Colonial history but also as historical records of the Andean civilizations, and that, in many present-day Andean peasant communities, myths are retold and transformed in adaptation to new social circumstances, maintaining, nevertheless, their old patterns and motifs. The new approach in the reading of Colonial sources consists mainly of an effort to recapture the point

(México: Libro Mex., 1958). Two Yagua texts with an interlinear word-for-word translation and many others in English translation are discussed by Paul Stewart Powlison, "Yagua Mythology and Its Epic Tendencies" (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1969).

The Tacana of northern Bolivia, who speak a language with many relationships to the Arawak and Pano stocks, have an extensive oral literature, of which a book of 700 pages has been made. The volume consists mostly of mythic narratives, which are presented in German; Karin Hissink and Albert Hahn, *Die Tacana, I: Erzählungsgut* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1961).

⁴⁹ "Inca Culture at the Time of the Conquest," *Handbook*, vol. 2, pp. 183-330; especially pp. 315-320, 321.

⁵⁰ "The Quechua in the Colonial World," *Handbook*, vol. 2, pp. 331-410; especially pp. 406-407.

⁵¹ "The Contemporary Quechua," *Handbook*, vol. 2, pp. 411-470.

of view of the aborigines in order to contrast their way of life and thought with that of their invaders. The Spanish conquest, traditionally told in the words of the conquerors, can now also be recounted in the words of the vanquished. What Miguel León-Portilla had started to do for the historiology of the conquest of Mexico, and in briefer outline for the conquest of Peru,⁵² has been pursued in some detail by several authors who have made contributions to the field of historical writing as well as to that of folkloric studies.

While older approaches to Peruvian ancient history paid attention to the myths mostly in the hope of unraveling from them historical facts which the lack of written documents made it impossible to find elsewhere, mythology is now regarded as a valuable part of the autochthonous civilization expressing in its own right a distinctive view of the world, human life, and political history. Another logical consequence of this new appreciation of Andean mythology is a keen interest in the Andean myths, both in their ancient and modern versions, as source materials for the historian of religions' reconstruction of the Andean pantheon. Among the most distinguished recent essays in this field are the studies by Franklin Pease G. Y., where the myth of Inkarrí (on which more shortly) plays an important role.⁵³

On the other hand there is a convergence of folkloric studies of highland peasants and ethnographic investigations of myths among Indians of the adjacent northern and eastern jungles. The type of research inaugurated in Peru by Julio C. Tello more than fifty years ago, which sought to find in Amazonian mythology the roots of such religious symbols of the earlier Andean civilizations as the Jaguar,⁵⁴ has been continued in the study of Toribio Mejía Xesspe, who analyzes the myth of Achkay, an anthropophagous supernatural of forbidding looks.⁵⁵ At his violent death (or at her violent death, because in some versions the monster appears as an ugly old woman), Achkay's body transforms itself into many useful plants, both wild and cultivated. The Achkay myth contains many other episodes into which we cannot now enter, and quite a few characters, some human, others animal, all

⁵² *El reverso de la conquista: Relaciones aztecas, mayas e incas* (México: Joaquín Mortiz, 1964).

⁵³ *El dios creador andino* (Lima: Mosca Azul, 1973).

⁵⁴ "Wira Kocha" (*Inca*, vol. 1, pp. 93-320, 583-606, Lima, 1923).

⁵⁵ "Mitología del norte andino peruano" (*América Indígena*, vol. 12, pp. 235-251, México, 1952).

symbolic of the gods of ancient Peru, according to Mejía Xesspe. The author also follows Tello in relating the mythic texts, collected in Chavín de Huantar, the Upper Marañón, and elsewhere, to figures in art objects revealed by archeology. This association of modern folklore, ethnography, and archeology is one of the most promising ways to fill the gaps in our knowledge of ancient Andean mythology.

Another successful method for the exploration and recovery of old myths and legends of the Andean peoples has been the collecting of stories told by a variety of informants according to oral tradition. This has been done not only in Peru, but also in Ecuador and Bolivia. One of the best such compilations was made by the celebrated Peruvian writer José María Arguedas, who edited a large number of reports made by school children representing many provinces of the country on the coast, in the highlands, and in the jungle.⁵⁶ Besides a few tales classified as myths, Arguedas's work includes scores of legends and short stories where mythological motifs abound. For instance, among the highland legends we read the tale of Achiqué. This cannibalistic old hag is no other than the Achkay we met in Mejía Xesspe's study of the myth. In this version from Taricá (Carhuaz, Ancash) the dead body of the harpy becomes the Andean mountain range, and her blood, splashed on hills and dales, made them into sand deserts not unlike those of coastal Peru. The last words of Achiqué, however, on seeing that the rope she was climbing was about to break and she would fall on a rock, were a curse wishing her bones to be interred underground, and her blood to become plants and herbs, a characteristic of the ancient nature god (or goddess) Achkay.⁵⁷

From another point of view, recent authors have studied Peruvian myths in order to clarify aspects of Inca social structure, or Andean conceptions of time and history. One such study has been done by R. T. Zuidema and concerns the system of imaginary lines, converging in Cuzco, along which lay the groups of holy sites in and around the

⁵⁶ José María Arguedas and Francisco Izquierdo Ríos, *Mitos, leyendas y cuentos peruanos* (Lima: Ministerio de Educación Pública, 1947; 2nd. ed.: Lima: Casa de Cultura del Perú, 1970).

⁵⁷ Another version of the Achiqué story is in Alejandro Ortiz Rescaniere, *De Ananava a Inkarrí. Una visión indígena del Perú* (Lima: Retablo de Papel, 1973), pp. 51-54; analysis: pp. 54-59.

⁵⁸ *The Ceque System of Cuzco: The Social Organization of the Capital of the Inca* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964).

navel of the Inca world.⁵⁸ These lines were called *ceques*, and certain social groups were responsible for the maintenance and worship of the sites lying on them. Following Levi-Strauss's ideas in his paper on dualist organizations, Zuidema analyzes the *ceque* system and mythical and legendary texts to show that the kinship principles that explained the organization of Cuzco were also applied to the whole structure of the Inca state.

The messianic conceptions implied by the Inca view of time, on the other hand, have far-reaching consequences. Of course they antecede the Spanish invasion, which came to be regarded within a symbolic framework that was valid before the conquest and is still working among many highland peasants today. This is perhaps best exemplified by the myth of Inkarrí (a Quechua word formed by the native *Inka* plus the Spanish *rey*, that is, the Inca king). Scores of versions have been collected in the Peruvian highlands, with some significant variations affecting the cosmological and eschatological meaning.⁵⁹ One typical version, however, could be summarized as follows. The Inca sovereign, who had command over men and nature, was killed and beheaded by the Spanish king, who took his head to Spain. Nobody knows where the body of Inkarrí is buried, but it is slowly growing a new head. When it is complete, Inkarrí will come back in triumph to lead his now forsaken people.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Juan M. Ossio A. has compiled a collection of articles on messianism among the Andean peoples: *Ideología mesiánica del mundo andino* (Lima: Ignacio Prado Pastor, 1973). Fifteen among the pieces included deal with the myth of Inkarrí. Many of them reproduce a recent version in Quechua with a Spanish translation. See also José María Arguedas, "Mitos quechuas post-hispánicos" (*Amaru*, no. 3, pp. 14-18, Lima, 1967), now in the posthumous book edited by Angel Rama: José María Arguedas, *Formación de una cultura nacional indoamericana* (México: Siglo XXI, 1975); and Ortiz Rescaniere, *De Adaneva a Inkarrí*. Ortiz Rescaniere shows that the ways of thinking of the Andean peasants can borrow forms from other cultures, but these forms adapt themselves to traditional structures. See also Ortiz Rescaniere, "Estructura tradicional y forma prestada en dos mitos de Paríamarca sobre la Virgen de Cuevasanta" (*Amaru*, no. 13, pp. 88-89, Lima, 1970).

⁶⁰ Fernando Diez de Medina, *La teogonía andina* (La Paz, Bolivia: Municipalidad de La Paz, 1973), is an imaginative, inspiring reconstruction of the hierophanies of Pacha, Wiracocha, Thunupa, and Wayjama, the mystic figures who preside over the four great cosmic revolutions of the Andes. Written as a literary essay rather than as a scholarly study, it retells many sacred stories and offers interesting suggestions for their interpretation.

The Chaco

As the Chaco culture area comprises only the northern part of the geographic entity called by that name, the zone of our interest roughly coincides with the regions described as Boreal and Central Chaco. These form a wooded plain lying between the Mato Grosso plateau in central Brazil and the lands on the right margin of the Bermejo River in Argentina, its extensive middle part being territories of eastern Bolivia and western and northern Paraguay. For thousands of years this dry soil, salty at times but more frequently tempered by rivers, marshes, and lagoons, has sheltered dozens of tribes representing such diverse linguistic groups as the Paleo-American Chiquito, Guaicurú, Lengua, Mataco, Vilela, and Zamuco, the Tropical Forest Tupí, the Andean Lule, and a number of isolated languages.

As with the *Handbook's* presentation of the Andean civilizations, the chapters on the Chaco are of unequal length, many pages being devoted to the ethnohistoric background but very few to the present-day Indians. In his excellent long article on the ethnography of the Chaco Métraux allotted more than four pages to their mythology,⁶¹ but Juan Belaieff, also writing for the first volume of the *Handbook* on the contemporary Indians of the same area, granted only a few lines to beliefs in supernatural animals and spirits and nothing to myths.⁶² Métraux could draw on his own research in Chaco mythology as well as on that of other ethnographers of the first half of the century. All these valuable contributions are collections of otherwise unavailable sources, but the critical and exegetical apparatus is scanty. More recent research shows that old traditions are still remembered, retold, and recast to suit new experiences, and also that they are parts of a distinctive world-view which in some cases includes a remarkable awareness of the historical plight of the aborigines as a consequence of their fatal contact with the whites.

The last point is particularly noticeable in some Tupí-Guaraní myths that were already well known when Métraux wrote his first book. Through a number of studies Léon Cadogan⁶³ and Egon Schaden⁶⁴

⁶¹ "The Ethnography of the Gran Chaco," *Handbook*, vol. 2, pp. 197-370; especially pp. 365-369.

⁶² "The Present Day Indians of the Gran Chaco," *Handbook*, vol. 2, pp. 371-380.

⁶³ Léon Cadogan is the author of many essays and studies on the Guarani culture of Paraguay. We will limit our references to the following: "El culto

have freshly explored and illuminated the significance of Guaraní mythology, which includes messianic overtones. Of late, Miguel Alberto Bartolomé has been able to reconstruct a myth of the Avá-Katú-Eté ("the true men," also called Avá-Chiripá, and Nāndeva) of eastern Paraguay, which is in fact the old story of the twin children of the Jaguar. This, with other tales of the origins of stars and constellations, plants and animals, makes up a whole mythic cycle.⁶⁵

al árbol y a los animales sagrados en el folklore y las tradiciones guaraníes" (*América Indígena*, vol. 10, pp. 327-333, México, 1950); "Mitología en la zona guaraní" (*ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 195-207, 1951); "The Eternal Pindó Palm and Other Plants in Mbyá-Guarani Myth and Legend," in *Miscellanea Paul Rivet* (Mexico: UNAM, 1958), pp. 87-96; and *Ywyra ñe'ery: Fluye del árbol la palabra: Sugestiones para el estudio de la cultura guaraní* (Asunción, Paraguay: Universidad Católica Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, 1971). See also *La literatura de los guaraníes*, versiones de León Cadogan, introducción de A. López Austin (México: Joaquín Mortiz, 1965), for Spanish translations of Guaraní texts and bibliographies.

⁶⁴ The fundamental study of Egon Schaden on Brazilian indigenous messianism is *A mitologia heroica de tribos indígenas do Brasil: Ensaio etno-sociológico* (Rio de Janeiro: Ministério da Educacão e Cultura, 1959; reprint of the 1945 edition). A brief summary of the problem among the Guaraní is Julio César Espínola, "A propósito del mesianismo en las tribus guaraní" (*América Indígena*, vol. 21, pp. 307-325, México, 1961). The related question of Guaraní prophetism has also been studied by other authors. There is a short résumé in Wolfgang H. Lindig, "Migrations des Tupi-Guaraní et eschatologie des Apapocuva-Guaraní," in Wilhelm E. Muhlmann, ed., *Messianismes révolutionnaires du tiers monde* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), a translation of *Chiliasmus und Nativismus* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1961). The classic general work on the subject is Vittorio Lanternari, *Movimenti religiosi di libertà e di salvezza dei popoli oppressi* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1960), Eng. tr.: *The Religions of the Oppressed: A Study of Modern Messianic Cults* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963).

⁶⁵ *Orekuera Royhendu (Lo que escuchamos en sueños): Shamanismo y religión entre los Avá-Katú-Eté del Paraguay* (México: Instituto Indigenista Inter-americano, 1977). The bibliography at the end of this book lists many articles by León Cadogan and by Egon Schaden which it is impossible to reproduce here. Also of interest for the study of Guaraní mythology: Natalicio González, *Ideología guaraní* (México: Instituto Indigenista Inter-americano, 1958); José Cruz Rolla, *Folklore, ritos y costumbres del pueblo guaraní* (Buenos Aires: Poseidon, 1954), especially chapters 4 and 5; Wanda Hanke, "Aus dem Mythenzyklus um Yaguaron" (*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, vol. 83, pp. 69-82, Braunschweig, 1958); Yampei Nasim, "Análisis de dos mitos sudamericanos: Kurupí y Yasy-yateré" (*Suplemento Antropológico de la Revista del Ateneo Paraguayo*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 77-98; Asunción, 1969); Gustavo González, "Más sobre Kurupí" (*ibid.*, pp. 99-113), and "Mitos, leyendas y supersticiones guaraníes del Paraguay" (*Suplemento Antropológico de la Revista del Ateneo Paraguayo*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 1-76, Asunción, 1967); Pierre Clastres, *Le grand parler: Mythes et chants sacrés des Indiens Guarani* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1974); and Jorge G. Blanco Villalta, *Mitos tupí-guaraníes* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1975).

Other Avá-Katú-Eté stories tell how the world ended because of mankind's unworthy conduct. The earth is destroyed by fire, by water, or more originally by Ñanderú Gauzú (Our Father), who overturns the Eternal Crossed Pole that holds the world. Cadogan has collected, among others, a deluge myth in which Charyipiré (the Grandmother) saves herself and her son by climbing a pindo palm tree that she caused to sprout by shaking her rhythm stick to the compass of a sacred song. "This is the origin of Pindoviyú (Wonder Palm Tree, or Eternal Palm Tree) which functions as *axis mundi* or connecting bridge between Heaven and earth in the Chiripa view of space."⁶⁶

The Mataco of northern Argentina count among the most intensively studied of the aboriginal groups of the Chaco in the last decade. The religion and mythology of these Indians, which had received the attention of Métraux and other ethnographers, has not only been researched anew: in at least one case, in a reversal of the materialistic approach, it has also been taken as the basis for the interpretation of Mataco economic life. According to Celia Mashnshnek, in order to understand the attitude of the Mataco toward land and game it is necessary to consider their beliefs in the masters or guardians of the fields.⁶⁷ A free translation of a text gathered in 1972 says: "Ahlolelé is the owner of the fields. He looks like a person. He owns all the country animals. The owner of the fields does not let you capture many ostriches. You can take only one. He is like a chief who gives the order to get animals, but if he does not give the order and you take an animal he becomes angry and he makes you sick. He also has the power to make you a doctor." Other texts in the same collection deal with Tokwah (elsewhere spelled Tokjwakj and otherwise), the well-known Mataco trickster, here a culture hero teaching how to hunt with bow and arrow and especially how to kill the tiger, as well as many other stories. In another article the same author illustrates her presentation of the Mataco pantheon with new mythic texts, five of which have Tokwah as introducer of semen (and thereby of human reproduction), adultery, polygamy, and murder, dyeing and weaving,

⁶⁶ Miguel Alberto Bartolomé, *Orekuera Royhendu*, p. 42. See also León Cadogan's "The Eternal Pindó Palm and Other Plants in Mbyá-Guaraní Myth and Legend," especially pp. 88-90.

⁶⁷ "Aportes para una comprensión de la economía de los mataco" (*Scripta Ethnologica*, vol. 3, no. 3, part 1, pp. 7-39, Buenos Aires, 1975).

the color of birds, and the burial of the dead.⁶⁸ Moreover, the cycle of Tokwah has been recorded again by Mario Califano (who was engaged in the study of Mataco shamanism) as his native informant insisted that he should hear the tales "from the beginning."⁶⁹ In addition to the mythic texts in Spanish (including many Mataco words explained in brackets or by the context) Califano offers a brief analysis of the main characters.

The Mataco-Mataguayo masters of the game were also studied by Alfredo Tomasini in 1968 among Mataco, Chorote, and Chulupí groups living on the right bank of the Pilcomayo River, Salta Province, Argentina. Many of the new texts recall earlier versions of the Tokwah stories and tales of the masters of plants and animals.⁷⁰ They are interesting in themselves and offer the possibility of making appropriate comparisons, as the following brief Chulupí text will show: "When one kills a peccary, right away the owner gets angry. The owner is just yellow, pure yellow! When one kills a peccary he gets angry and says: 'Why have you killed my child?'" Tomasini has also gathered new versions of such astral myths as Star Woman and the contest of Sun (burning hot male) and Moon (icy cold female), a match which resulted in a draw.

The Tokwah stories have been reinterpreted by Miguel Alberto Bartolomé (who spells the trickster's name Tokwaj) from the viewpoint of the mythology of interethnic contact.⁷¹ He reprints two tales, one first published by Nordenskiöld, the other by Métraux, and adds some more he recorded in the shantytown around Embarcación, Salta, Argentina, in 1970-1971. According to Bartolomé, as the Mataco world is increasingly impinged upon by the whites, the aborigines take poetic vengeance by making the intruders the victims of the trickster's practical jokes. This study shows both the persistence of ancient Mataco cosmology and the flexibility of the heroic themes as they adapt themselves to changing social pressures.

⁶⁸ "Seres potentes y héroes míticos de los matacos del Chaco Central" (*ibid.*, vol. I, no. I, pp. 105-154, 1973).

⁶⁹ "El chamanismo mataco" (*ibid.*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 7-60, 1976).

⁷⁰ "Señores de los animales, constelaciones y espíritus en [sic] el bosque en el cosmos mataco-mataguayo" (*Runa*, vol. 12, nos. 1-2, pp. 427-443, Buenos Aires, 1969-1970).

⁷¹ "La mitología del contacto entre los mataco: una respuesta simbólica al conflicto interétnico" (*América Indígena*, vol. 36, pp. 517-557, México, 1976).

East of the lands occupied by the Mataco, between the Pilcomayo and Bermejo rivers, is the scattered home of the Toba, who speak a dialect of the Guaicurú stock. The important collections of their myths gathered before the *Handbook* went to press have now been supplemented by the posthumous publication of materials gleaned by Enrique Palavecino;⁷² by an extensive article, documented with many mythical texts, by Edgardo J. Cordeu;⁷³ and by a study undertaken by Alfredo Tomasini.⁷⁴ The texts collected by Palavecino deal with a variety of subjects, including a story relating the exploits of Tankí, a trickster similar to the Mataco Tokwah. This has been more extensively researched by Tomasini in a paper reproducing thirty myths which show Tankí in many different roles. Cordeu's article, on the other hand, makes interesting comparisons between the Toba and Andean cosmologies, considering that the world-view of the highlands has influenced that of the Chaco. He also presents the Toba hero, Nowat, as the archetypal *piogonak* (shaman), and comments on the major hierophanies, including the Christian, Evangelical reinterpretation of the traditional apocalyptic motifs of Toba mythology. When we compare the myths collected by Cordeu with those garnered by Métraux⁷⁵ wide discrepancies appear, perhaps because of changes occurring in the intervening decades, or, as Cordeu wisely suggests, because there are still aspects of Toba religious life we do not yet know.

In his article for the *Handbook* Métraux considered the Guaicurú-speaking Pilagá as the only remaining group of the Argentine Chaco that has preserved a chiefly autochthonous culture, but neither he nor Belaieff in the following article had anything to say on Pilagá mythology in spite of Métraux's own researches and publications on this subject. Recent work has been done in an effort to salvage what can still be reaped in this field. Although the scanty testimonies so far

⁷² "Mitos de los indios tobas," with an introduction by María Delia Millán de Palavecino (*Runa*, vol. 12, nos. 1-2, pp. 177-181, Buenos Aires, 1969-1970).

⁷³ "Aproximación al horizonte mítico de los tobas" (*ibid.*, pp. 67-176).

⁷⁴ "Tankí, un personaje mítico de los Toba de occidente" (*Scripta Ethnologica*, vol. 2, no. 2, part 1, pp. 133-150, and vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 133-148, Buenos Aires, 1974 and 1975). See also by Juan Alfredo Tomasani, "El concepto de *payak* entre los toba de occidente" (*ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 2, part 1, pp. 123-130, 1974).

⁷⁵ *Myths of the Toba and Pilagá Indians of the Gran Chaco* (Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1946).

made public indicate extensive influence of Biblical teachings, it is possible to reconstruct ancient stories of the origin of man and woman (not unknown to Métraux) which insist on the *vagina dentata* motif.⁷⁶ According to the Pilagá tales, their first parents were a woman who came from heaven and animals later changed into men. Of them, eagle (Métraux has hawk), by throwing a stone between the opened legs of crouching women, succeeded in breaking their dangerous teeth and made them safe for intercourse and reproduction. The other animals followed suit, and begot spring. The first Pilagá were fathered by Dove, a feeble creature. That is why the Pilagá are weak today. This story may soon be complemented by other versions gathered in the course of more recent and yet unpublished field work.

At the time of Métraux's writing for the *Handbook*, the Ayoreo (or Moro, or Morocoto), a Zamuco-speaking group roaming the unexplored plains of Bolivia and Paraguay in northern Chaco, were not accessible.⁷⁷ Métraux said that the little we knew about them came from vague references and a few artifacts collected in their abandoned camps. He added that they were hostile both to other Indians and to whites.⁷⁸ Today most Ayoreo have been forced to settle in supervised camps and extensive studies of their shattered culture, including the mythology, are under way. By far the most important of these is a monograph written by Marcelo Bórmida on the significance of the material culture of the Ayoreo that attempts to understand the meaning of every item among Ayoreo paraphernalia.⁷⁹ Indeed, each Ayoreo household object, tool or weapon, or piece of dress or decoration has a myth explaining how it came into being. By recounting and analyzing these myths Bórmida has been able to set the study of Ayoreo ergology on a new methodological and theoretical footing, quite different from the "objective" descriptions of classic ethnography. Other brief collections of Ayoreo myths, just published, barely let us take a quick

⁷⁶ Sara Josefina Newbery, "Los pilagá: su religión y sus mitos de origen" (*América Indígena*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 758-769, México, 1973). More Pilagá mythic texts can be expected from field work done in 1974 by C. O. Maschneke and M. A. Ríos.

⁷⁷ Alfred Métraux, *Myths of the Toba and Pilagá Indians of the Gran Chaco*, p. 2.

⁷⁸ "Ethnography of the Gran Chaco," *Handbook*, vol. 1, p. 244.

⁷⁹ "Ergon y mito. Una hermeneutica de la cultura material de los ayoreo del Chaco Boreal" (*Scripta Ethnologica*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 9-68, vol. 2, no. 2, part 1, pp. 41-107, vol. 3, no. 3, part 1, pp. 73-130, Buenos Aires, 1973, 1974, 1975).

glance into the Ayoreo spiritual world.⁸⁰ Bórmida recognizes that his informants are still reluctant to tell stories they consider *puyák* (tabú), which is the reason why many aspects of Ayoreo mythology, particularly their cosmology, have not yet been adequately grasped.

Writing on the sources of Chaco folklore about 1946, Métraux said: "There is still time to record the folklore of the Chaco Indians," by which he meant their mythology (the text appears in a book published by the American Folklore Society).⁸¹ And a little farther on he added: "A rich harvest still can be reaped, but time is short." His premonition has been fulfilled. Remarkable new crops of mythic texts have been harvested among the Guarani, Mataco, Toba, and a few other Chaco tribes, but little have we heard of the mythology of such other Chaco groups as the Mocoví, the Vilela, the Lengua, or the Chané. We do not know whether this is because of want of ethnographers or because for these groups time has finally run out.⁸²

The Upper Xingu

The map of Brazil has been divided into eleven culture areas, one of which is the Upper Xingu.⁸³ The hinterland savanna of this region

⁸⁰ Marcelo Bórmida, "Ayoreo Myths" (*Latin American Indian Literatures*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 1-13, Pittsburgh, 1978).

⁸¹ *Myths of the Toba and Pilagá Indians of the Gran Chaco*, p. 2.

⁸² Other contributions to Chaco mythology and mythic thought are: Otto Zerries, "Las constelaciones como expresión de la mentalidad cazadora en Sudamérica" (*Estudios Americanos*, vol. 17, no. 88-89, pp. 1-18, Sevilla, 1959); Ubén G. Arancibia, *Vida y mitos del mundo mataco* (Buenos Aires: Depalma, 1973); Mario Califano, "El ciclo de Tokjwáj: Análisis fenomenológico de una narración mítica de los mataco costaneros" (*Scripta Ethnologica*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 157-182, Buenos Aires, 1973); Miguel Angel de los Ríos, "Temporalidad y potencia entre los grupos mataco" (*ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 7-38, 1974); José Braunstein, "Dominios y jerarquías en la cosmovisión de los mataco-tewokleley" (*ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 7-30, 1974); Andrés A. Pérez Diez, "Noticia sobre la concepción del ciclo anual entre los mataco del noreste de Salta" (*ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 111-120); Edgardo J. Cordeu, "La idea de mito en las expresiones narrativas de los indios chamacoco o ishor" (*ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 75-139), and "Textos míticos de los angaité (chenanesma) y sanapana" (*ibid.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 237-248); and Celia Olga Maschinschnek, "Textos míticos de los chulupí" (*ibid.*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 151-189, 1975), and "Algunos personajes de la mitología chorote" (*Relaciones de la Sociedad Argentina de Antropología*, n.s., vol. 6, pp. 109-122, Buenos Aires, 1972). There are several articles on Mataco culture and world-view in *Estudios Franciscanos*, no. 35, Salta (Argentina), Agosto, 1974.

⁸³ Eduardo Galvão, "Áreas culturais indígenas do Brasil; 1900-1959" (*Boletín do Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi*, n.s., Antropologia, no. 8, Belém, Janeiro, 1966), also in English translation: "Indigenous Culture Areas of Brazil, 1900-1959," in

is crossed by such important tributaries of the Xingu as the Steinen, Ronuro, Jatobá, Batovi or Coliseu, and Kuluene rivers. Over the centuries more than a dozen tribes have made their settlements on these rivers' thickly forested borders, taking refuge as the aborigines of coastal and eastern Brazil, forced by the whites to move west, invaded other tribes' territories. The whole region was unknown until 1884, when Karl von Steinen discovered the Northern Bacairi, Custenau, Waura, Suiá, and Manitsaua, and in 1887 the Nahukwa, Mehinacu, Aweti, Yawalapiti, Trumai, and Kamayurá. He was able to collect a number of myths of the Bacairi, which he included in his book on the Indians of Central Brazil.

When Claude Levi-Strauss wrote "The Tribes of the Upper Xingu" for the *Handbook*, more sources for the study of these tribes' mythologies had become available.⁸⁴ Levi-Strauss classified the Xingu stories into three groups: (1) the cycle of Kevi and Kame, who are (again) the twin children of Jaguar; (2) animal tales; and (3) historical legends. These recount the mythic origins of the tribes, and in some cases also of the whites, thereby "explaining" their different cultural characteristics. No relation, however, was established between the mythical corpus and the rites of the Upper Xingu tribes, some of which are briefly described by Levi-Strauss in the above-mentioned article.

Shortly after the publication of the third volume of the *Handbook*, the Xingu National Park was established under federal control in order to protect the flora, fauna, and aboriginal population of the area. Thanks to the work of the brothers Leonardo, Orlando, and Claudio Villas Boas tribes formerly hostile, or unknown, were attracted into the park: the Juruna (isolated, perhaps Tupí) in 1950, the Mekrangnontí or Metotire (Jê) in 1953, the Suiá in 1960, and the Txikâo (perhaps Carib) in 1966. The northern half of the reservation is now the home of the Suiá, Txukarramãe (Jê), Caiabí (Tupí), and Juruna. Between the northern and southern parts of the Upper Xingu there were until recently some uncontacted tribes on which, naturally, little or nothing could be said with certainty: the Miarrã, the Kreen Akarore, the Avaicü, the Agavotogueng. It is in the area between the Steinen and the Kuluene, however, where the most important cluster of Upper Xingu

Indians of Brazil in the Twentieth Century, ed. and trans. Janice H. Hopper (Washington: Institute for Cross-Cultural Research, 1967).

⁸⁴ *Handbook*, vol. 3, pp. 321-348.

groups concentrate their villages, forming a peaceful society of Indian nations which have developed a very homogenous culture while retaining their original languages: the Awetí and Kamayurá (Tupí), the Kalapalo, Kuikúru, Matipú, and Nafuquá (Carib), the Yawalapítí, Meináco, and Waurá (Arawak), and a tenth tribe, the Trumai, speaking an isolated language. Some of these groups number fewer than one hundred persons, the total population of the southern area being estimated around eight hundred.

Because of friendly relations among the tribes and shared patterns of culture, mythic traditions become common property and are repeated in different languages. The Kamayurá story of Mavutsinim, for instance, which includes the adventures of the twin children of the Jaguar, here called Tapeacaña and Tapeiaú (names given by Armadillo), parallels the Kuikúru version in which the heroes are named Rit (Sun) and Une (Moon). The collection of Xingu myths published by the Villas Boas, though largely dependent on Kamayurá informants, also includes Kuikúru and Juruna stories.⁸⁵ Moreover, there is now a whole book of Kamayurá stories in German, presenting not only the well-known creation of women from tree trunks, performed by Mavutsinim, and other tales related to Morená, the sacred center at the confluence of the Steinen and the Kuluene, the headwaters of the Xingu, as the adventures of the Jaguar's children, but also other tales "explaining" the origins of salt or manioc and feasts and dances or relating legendary events or stories of supernatural animals and other mythical beings.⁸⁶ Although Mark Münzel, compiler and translator into German of this valuable collection, does not attempt a mythological analysis of his materials, he provides many useful explanations of the terms employed, especially those referring to plants and animals, customs and rites.

The best study of Upper Xingu mythology we have seen so far has been done by Pedro Agostinho as a commentary on an Aweti version of the basic myth of Sun and Moon (the well-known Twins), which

⁸⁵ Orlando Villas Boas and Claudio Villas Boas, *Xingu; os indios seus mitos* (Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1970), trans. as *Xingu: The Indians, Their Myths* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973). The English language edition includes an introduction by Kenneth S. Brecher and drawings by the Waurá Indian Wacipiá.

⁸⁶ Mark Münzel, *Erzählungen des Kamayurá, Alto Xingu, Brasilien* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1973).

he compares with other Tupí versions (Kamayurá), Arawak versions (Yawalapiti and Waurá), Carib versions (Kalapalo and Bacairi), and a Trumai version.⁸⁷ In his conclusions Agostinho points out that the Xingu myth of origins shows a primitive system of classification organizing a primordial chaotic reality into a well-structured cultural order. From another viewpoint this classificatory process presents itself as a myth of passage whose terminal stage is a rite of the same type. The ritual replays an original act, closing a cycle and starting another, in which new aspects of being are born that affect climate, plant and animal life, the human habitat and its economy, social and religious institutions, and even the structure of space and time. This last point takes us back to that sacred center which is the origin of the Xingu Cosmos: the Morená. It coincides here with the village where the Morená drama is represented. Profane or historical times become intemporal and sacred because of their ritual participation in and fusion with the mythic paradigm. Tribes and fish converge toward the center annihilating the space created by the expansion of the earth, and reestablishing the interrupted communication with heaven. From this center another recreated cosmos will now again start to unfurl.

Agostinho's interpretations show that taxonomical and religious interpretations of myth do not necessarily cancel each other: they both can be used as complementary explanations of myth as a complex phenomenon, one stressing the underlying logical patterns, the other expressing its spiritual significance. This is also well brought out in a detailed study of *kwaryp*, the funeral rite of the Upper Xingu where the tree trunks erected in the center of the village represent the people whose death is being commemorated. Agostinho's book on *kwaryp*⁸⁸ includes a section of relevant mythic texts presenting in new versions some of the stories we have already read in other compilations: Mavutsinim goes to get his supply of bowstring and meets Jaguar, who spares him on condition that Mavutsinim give his daughter to Jaguar in marriage; Kwat and Yai, the Jaguar's children, are born; etc. There are also myths about the origins of the big rivers that drain into the

⁸⁷ "Estudo preliminar sobre o mito de origens xinguano: Comentário a uma variante Aweti" (*Universitas, Revista de Cultura de Universidade Federal da Bahia*, nos. 6-7, pp. 457-519, Salvador, Mayo-Decembre 1970).

⁸⁸ *Kwariç: Mito e ritual no Alto Xingu* (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 1974).

Xingu, the origins of the tribes and of the whites, the origins of manioc, Kwat and Yai's magic trip to the sky, and others.⁸⁹

Concluding Remarks

It has been our purpose to present some recent developments in South American mythology by way of select examples rather than by attempting a survey of the whole field, a task that would have required a far greater number of pages. Matters concerning Amerindian religions, languages, cultures, history, and sheer survival have been deliberately avoided, or given only a passing consideration, in order that we might confine our attention to the subject at hand, although some knowledge of these questions is necessary if we want to understand the Indian mythologies. In spite of these omissions we hope to have substantiated the points proposed at the beginning, and conclude that there is an ongoing progress in South American mythological studies, both in quantity and quality, because of the higher number of researchers, the better equipment at their disposal, and the more refined methodology.

Concerning methods of interpretation, significant turns have occurred since the time of Métraux, when the study of myth was almost exclusively tied to that of the diffusion of motifs. While it is true that this approach is still considered valid, and distinguished scholars continue to practice it, the major contributions to the field of mythological exegesis are represented by the following: (1) correlation of the structure of the myth and the kinship system of the tribe as forms of a logically valid taxonomic system; (2) correlation of the myth with the religious life of the tribe, particularly its ritual and shamanism; (3) esthetic and metaphysical interpretation of the symbolic elements

⁸⁹ More myths of the Upper Xingu tribes can be found in José Cândido M. Carvalho, *Relações entre os Índios do Alto Xingu e a fauna regional* (Rio de Janeiro: Publicaciones Avulsas do Museu Nacional, no. 7, 1951), Karapalo myth in Portuguese rendering: pp. 16-25; Kalervo Oberg, "Indian Tribes of Northern Mato Grosso, Brazil" (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, Institute of Social Anthropology, Pub. No. 15, 1953), Bacairi myth, pp. 77-79; Robert F. Murphy and Buell Quain, *The Trumai Indians of Central Brazil* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1955), on Trumai mythology: pp. 72-75; Harold Schultz "Lendas Waura" (*Revista do Museu Paulista*, no. 5, vol. 16, São Paulo, 1965, 1966); Harold Schultz and Vilma Chiara, "Mais lendas Waurá" (*Journal de la Société des Americanistes*, vol. 60, pp. 105-135, Paris, 1971); and Ellen B. Basso, *The Kalapalo Indians of Central Brazil* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), Kalapalo myth in English: pp. 10-12.

in the myth, especially those that express a cosmological image; (4) interpretation of changes introduced in the older mythic narratives as a response to challenges of the powerful, aggressive, civilization of the whites, in order to safeguard the traditional patterns of life, especially the religious values, in the face of dangerous pressures. As these approaches represent so many other points of view they do not necessarily contradict each other, but are rather complementary and can be successively applied to the same mythic texts with illuminating results that go far beyond the mere enunciation of the motifs.

We shall only add a few reflections and recommendations concerning the present needs of our discipline and the consequences of its modern results for other sciences in the university curriculum.

1. Recordings of the mythic traditions of tribes that have only recently been contacted, and in some cases are already in a process of cultural disintegration, should be made before it is too late. Such groups in the Upper Xingu include the Kreen Akarore, the Isconahua on the limits of Brazilian and Peruvian Amazonia, and the Araras north of the Tocantins-Xingu area.

2. Fresh recordings, transcriptions, and translations of oral texts are required of those tribes from whom we only possess unscientifically collected materials. This is the case in a large number of indigenous societies.

3. The systematic publication of mythic texts, accompanied by literal and free translations, linguistic explanations, and ethnological commentary is a must. Publications of this kind might be undertaken at two levels, one for specialists, another for the general reader (in which case the more technical aspects of the critical apparatus could be omitted). If the universities cannot or will not undertake this publishing venture, national government agencies or international institutions (UNESCO, for instance) should carry it out.

4. Scholarly monographs are needed about myths that are especially interesting by virtue of their significance for the religious life of the tribe, or as expression of aboriginal thought, or because of the range of their diffusion, or similar reasons.⁹⁰ The relationship between mythology and cosmology is worth exploring in detail with reference to the

⁹⁰ Heinz Walter's doctoral dissertation, "Der Jaguar in der Vorstellungswelt der Südamerikanischen Naturvolkes (Hamburg: Universitat, 1956, microfilm), is a valuable study.

general world view of many tribes.⁹¹ Other subjects deserving exploration: the mythic significance of everyday objects, and the image of the whites in the eyes of the Indians.⁹²

5. The impact of myth and mythic thought on the social sciences and the humanities at large should be emphasized. The monumental work of Levi-Strauss shows how rewarding a study of South American myths can be for a better understanding of "primitive" thought. A similar assemblage of myths, examined in the light of the teachings of Coomaraswamy, van der Leeuw, Pettazzoni, Eliade, Campbell and their disciples, can be equally revealing for the humanities, and particularly for the appreciation of "primitive" art, literature, and philosophy. Of course the same claims could be made for the mythologies of all continents. South American mythologies, however, are particularly relevant in this connection because of the richness of the materials at hand, and the comparatively modest interest evinced by those institutions of higher learning that are nearest to the places where those pithy, juicy fruits of "primitive" imagination grow.⁹³

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⁹¹ Cosmology, shamanism, and symbolism are emphasized in the myth analysis of J. A. Vázquez, "Nacimiento e infancia de Elal: Mitoanálisis de un texto tehuelche meridional" (*Revista Iberoamericana*, vol. 42, pp. 201-216, Pittsburgh, 1976).

⁹² See Charles R. Marsh, Jr., "The Image of the Whites in Amazonian Oral Literature" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1977).

⁹³ More bibliographic references to South American mythology will be found in Timothy J. O'Leary, *Ethnographic Bibliography of South America* (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1963). A new series of South American mythic texts in English translation is under way, edited by Johannes Wilbert and published by the Latin American Center of the University of California at Los Angeles. Three volumes so far have appeared: *Folk Literature of the Warao Indians* (1970), *Folk Literature of the Selknam Indians* (1975), and *Folk Literature of the Yamana Indians* (1977).

BOOK REVIEWS

MATHEWS, Donald G., *Religion in the Old South* — Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1977, XX + 274 p., \$ 10.95 £ 7.70.

This is the most important analysis of Southern religion to appear in at least a generation. It does for "the Evangelical Way" what a host of interpreters have managed to do for "the New England Way." Recognizing that exceptions to both of these "Ways" do exist in their respective regions, one can nonetheless only be grateful to Donald G. Mathews for presenting with authority and sensitivity a definition and evocation of the essence of a time and a place in America's past.

That place is the American South and the time is from 1750 to 1860. Within this frame, the author confronts complexity and paradox and change with clear and penetrating gaze. His book is not about white Christianity or black Christianity, but about the two together and their resulting creation. The book centers not on the converted individual or the external society, but upon both and their fruitful or abrasive interaction. The book is limited to neither the puny efforts of man nor the wondrous acts of God, but shows how these too are mixed in the splendor and tragedy of a regional ideology.

It is a rare pleasure to watch an author work with his materials with such mastery and assurance. Clearly, Professor Mathews has lived with his subject for years, has been moved and haunted by portions of it, and is not yet prepared to lay the whole matter finally to rest. Drawing upon insights from psychology, anthropology, sociology and theology, Mathews writes above all else as an historian, seeing in Southern Evangelicalism a social *process* with many stages of development and reaction, of growth and arrest. And the story which he tells is recounted in language that informs, delights, stimulates and inspires.

The author begins by demonstrating that Southern pietism, while directed toward the individual, has a powerful communal dimension. Conversion called the believer out from the world, but Evangelicalism "did not leave him alone, nor did it celebrate his isolation. It brought him immediately into a community established on rules and regulations" quite different from those he left behind (p. 19-20). In this process, the convert found a new identity, esteem and status. So while "Evangelicalism has often been thought of as the religious mood of individualism," no one reading this book can fail to appreciate its force in creating a "redemptive community," its ability to replace "the

disorder of the world with the order of ‘Christian society’” (p. 39-40). Trite distinctions between private and public morality are not merely trite: they are in this context irrelevant. “For the Evangelicals, there could be no such thing as behavior which was of only private concern; a Christian’s every action was social and therefore under the jurisdiction of the church” (p. 44).

Revising upward the rough estimates of eighteenth century church membership in the South, Mathews shows how within a single generation the Evangelical movement had “become a major force in southern life.” Bursts of growth of Presbyterians in the 1740s, of Baptists in the 1750s and 60s, and of Methodists in the 1770s gave Southern religion by the end of the century an indelible Evangelical stamp. And while denominational loyalties were real, “the unity of the Evangelicals against the world was seen as transcending sectarian differences.” Revivalism and the camp meeting helped to create a common morality, even more a common ideology: i.e., “a cluster of anxieties, perceptions, values and aspirations which emanated from the Evangelicals’ social situation, personal experiences, and formal thoughts” (p. 48, 51, 58).

Having achieved respect in their own eyes, Evangelicals in the nineteenth century resolved to win the respect, or at least the attention, of the larger society. They would become society’s moral preceptor and guardian. Through colleges and academies, through disciplined family life, through earnest class meetings and church conferences, redeemed men and redeemed women (there is an excellent section on “the birth of the Evangelical woman”) set about to claim the whole region for the Lord. What, then, about slavery? In one of the most subtle and sophisticated segments of the book, Mathews shows the responsible if tortured development of a slaveholding ethic. Addressing the differing concerns of society, of masters, and of slaves, Evangelicals drew on Federalist theory, on biblical precedent or injunction, on bad ethnocentrism or worse anthropology, but also on Evangelical notions of duty, restraint, discipline and reform. At the heart of the slaveholding ethic was a “recognition of the slave’s humanity”—not a beast, but a man to whom was due, said the Reverend Richard Fuller of South Carolina, all that is owed to an “intelligent, social, immortal being.”

The penultimate chapter on black Evangelicalism is the emotional climax of the book, displaying the finest writing and the deepest feeling. And Southern religion—Mathews hammers the point home—simply cannot be understood apart from black religion and its spirituality, its morality, its liturgy, and its cultural context. In the course of Evangelicalism’s sweep across the South, blacks discovered “two very important things—that the freedom promised by the gospel was real and that Christianity was not solely the white man’s possession.” In explicating these two discoveries Mathews takes a text, as did the

black preacher John Jasper whom he quotes: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). Biblical history was filled, and black preaching correspondingly was filled, with examples of God's transforming the despised and the disinherited into "more than conquerors": Moses, Joshua, Daniel and many more. "God's power had been made manifest before in a despised Jew executed as a common criminal . . . in those who labored and were heavy-laden, in the meek, in the captives, in people who knew the oppressor would be judged and the prisoners set free just because of the Gospel which the oppressor himself had given his slaves" (p. 229). More than conquerors, blacks taught former masters the redemptive power of the suffering servant as well as the avenging power of Apocalyptic anger.

Donald Mathews has written an historical essay whose principal themes are announced, enlarged, modulated and affirmed with subtlety and great care, with balance and humanity, with passion and with wisdom. In college bookstores of the United States, the number of volumes on religion in colonial New England may still outnumber those on religion in the Old South by five to one. But Mathews' book will be that one.

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HOENES, Sigrid-Eike, *Untersuchungen zu Wesen und Kult der Göttin Sachmet*, Habelts Dissertationsdrucke, Reihe Ägyptologie I
-- Bonn, Rudolf Habelt Verlag, 1976, XVIII + 274 p. DM 36.

Die Tendenz um einer altägyptischen Gottheit eine Monographie zu widmen hält an. Seit meiner Beobachtung in *Orientalia* 39 (1970), 204, vgl. *Vox Theologica* 43 (1973), 330/1, haben Bleeker und Quaegebeur über Hathor und Thot, bez. Schai geschrieben. Die löwenköpfige Sachmet ist jetzt von Frau Hoenes untersucht worden.

Die Arbeit ist vorwiegend beschreibend, gibt aber auch Deutungen und Folgerungen. Sie betont Kult und Heimat (Hoenes: Memphis). Wir verdanken der Schriftstellerin ein klares und übersichtliches Buch, das man leicht zu Rate ziehen kann.

Nicht alle Belegstellen sind jedoch berücksichtigt worden. Sonst hätte Dr. Hoenes S. 200 nicht erklärt: "... die Verbindung von Sachmet mit ihrem Sohn Nefertem lässt sich nicht vor dem Neuen Reich nachweisen"; vgl. schon *CT* IV 302 d.

Voorschoten (Holland),
Kon. Emmalaan 12

M. HEERMA VAN VOSS

CHRONICLE

Most of the events announced as "forthcoming" in a previous issue of NUMEN (see NUMEN XXV, 93-94) have meanwhile taken place. An account of the annual meeting of the German member association, May 1978, is given in this issue.

The IX World Congress of Sociology took place at Uppsala, August 14-19, 1978, and devoted six of its sessions to religious themes: "Religion and Social Development"; "Religion and Identity"; "Religion and Secularisation"; "New Religious Movements" and "Religion and Spiritual Wellbeing" (two sessions). The ever increasing interest of the social sciences in the study of religion is certainly significant. No doubt some historians of religion view with misgivings what appears to them a massive take-over of "their" subject by the "imperialism" of the social sciences; others see in this development a welcome broadening of the horizons of our discipline.

Journals and publication series in the field of religious studies are continuing to multiply. Readers of NUMEN will be interested to learn of the Berkeley Research Publishing (now renamed Lancaster-Miller Publishers, 2490 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. 94704) venture of which not only the *Berkeley Religious Studies Series* but also the *Art Books* and the *Asian Humanities* series are sure to merit the attention of students of religion. NUMEN hopes to review the more important publications in these series.

Mysticism, drawing increasing interest (for better and for worse) from a large public, must not surprise us by giving birth to a new quarterly journal *Studia Mystica* (ed. from the Department of Humanities, California State University at Sacramento, Sacramento, Cal. 95819, U.S.A.). The editors propose to go beyond strictly academic scholarship and to allow expression also to other (e.g. artistic) forms evoking mystical sensibility.

The French-speaking section of the University of Louvain (Belgium), now transferred to Louvain-la-Neuve, has established not only a new Chair for the History of Religions but also a research *Centre d'Histoire des Religions* and initiated a new publication series, entitled *Homo Religiosus*. All good wishes to the new *Centre* and to its publication programme.

Z.W.

European Association for Japanese Studies

La première conférence européenne des études japonaises qui s'est tenue du 20-21 septembre 1976 à Zurich sous les auspices de l'European Association for Japanese Studies a réuni entre autres une trentaine de spécialistes européens et japonais des religions et de la pensée japonaises, lesquels constituèrent la 5^e section de la conférence (Religions et Philosophie). De même que les autres, cette section fut honorée de la présence d'un éminent universitaire japonais connu pour ses travaux consacrés à la fois à la littérature médiévale et à certains aspects du bouddhisme ésotérique.

Si l'ensemble des communications portait sur un large éventail de tendances religieuses et idéologiques, on peut toutefois remarquer certaines lacunes, tels le shintô proprement dit, les religions et croyances populaires ainsi que le christianisme. Ces absences, qui relèvent sans doute du hasard, ne reflètent toutefois pas forcément les grandes orientations de la japonologie européenne, car des recherches portant sur ces domaines sont actuellement en cours dans différents pays d'Europe. Sans vouloir établir une échelle de valeur entre les différentes communications, toutes également intéressantes, et qui se concourent souvent sur de féconds échanges de vues, nous nous contenterons d'en présenter ici quelques exposés sommaires. L'invité d'honneur, Monsieur le professeur Yamada Shôzen, de l'Université Taishô, commença par un examen des poèmes de type *waka*, surtout de Saigyô, consacrés à la lune, qu'il relia magistralement aux pratiques ésotériques de Contemplation de la lune (*gachirin-kan*), éclairant ainsi le sens de la composition de tels poèmes par certains religieux du Moyen Age.

Le professeur H. Dumoulin, bien connu pour ses travaux sur le Zen et d'autres aspects du bouddhisme, présenta une vue générale de l'évolution du syncrétisme shintô-bouddhique, abordant quelques problèmes dans le cadre plus vaste de l'histoire des idées au Japon. Monsieur le professeur Sasaki G., de l'Université Otani, esquissa dans sa communication une comparaison typologique de la souillure dans la mentalité religieuse du Japon ancien et dans l'hindouisme apportant ainsi une contribution aux recherches de religion comparée. Le révérend Kyôdo J. de l'Université Taishô, présenta les aspects les plus récents de la recherche japonaise dans une conférence sur la méthodologie des

études Tendai, insistant sur la nécessité d'une nouvelle approche des dogmes anciens et des textes qui les exposent.

Madame L. Berthier s'intéressa également au syncrétisme shintô-bouddhique examiné à travers l'exemple concret d'un rituel apparemment bouddhique, le *shuni-e* du Tôdajî, où elle mit en lumière les traits shintô qui le sous-tendent.

Le docteur J. Laube s'attaqua à un examen de la notion de 'pratique' (*gyô*) chez Shinran en la comparant à la pensée d'un philosophe contemporain japonais Tanabe Hajime.

Monsieur J. N. Robert, attaché de recherche au CNRS, s'essaya à comparer la critique du taoïsme chez Kûkai telle qu'il l'expose dans le *Sangô shiiki* à d'autres analyses du même genre faites en Chine. Monsieur le professeur C. Steenstrup poursuivant alors ses recherches à l'Université Harvard réalise le lien entre les deux grands thèmes traités dans la section par sa brillante présentation de la pensée de Hôjô Shigetoki, bouddhiste et homme d'état du XIII^e siècle qui se préoccupa à la fois d'établir un programme de formation d'une élite japonaise, fondée sur les valeurs bouddhiques, confucéennes et guerrières et de définir les critères épistémologiques et éthiques du gouvernement.

Deux grands figures du néo-confucianisme d'Edo, Hayashi Razan et Ogyû Sorai firent l'objet de communications très claires et remarquées de MM les professeurs O. Lidin de l'Université de Copenhague et W. J. Boot de l'Université de Leyde.

Monsieur le professeur Iki H., de l'Université de Kyûshû, tâcha de faire une démonstration de l'intégration de la pensée confucéenne dans les temps d'après Meiji.

Dans un domaine nettement différent et plus actuel, celui des 'religions nouvelles', Melle B. Bernegger de l'Université de Zurich, familiarisa l'auditoire avec les doctrines complexes d'une des plus puissantes sectes modernes, l'Ômoto-kyô.

Ce bref résumé, qui ne prétend pas être complet, donnera, on l'espère, une idée de la richesse et de la diversité des recherches actuelles; on ne pourra que regretter, comme toujours, dans les conférences bien organisées, que le cadre étroit de l'horaire ait rendu difficile les longues discussions que l'intérêt même des communications appelait.

German Section of the IAHR

The 14th Congress took place from 15-18 May, 1978, in Bonn. The general subject of this congress was: "Life and death in the light of religious symbolics." On the one hand the problems of this theme have described from various methodological points—in addition to scientists of religions spoke scientists of aesthetics and musicologists, moreover for the first time the DVRG had invited for statements members of the French, Dutch, and British branch of the IAHR—, on the other hand the historical and geographical spectrum comprehended the Roman religion just as Neohinduism, European, African and a number of Asian religions.

The congress began with a feast-lecture on "Religionswissenschaft as a hermeneutic science" by the philosopher O. F. Bollnow from Tübingen. He characterized Religionswissenschaft as a science of understanding—totally in the classic german tradition—primarely directed on religious symbols and its "real" meanings. This statement brought a violent discussion about the self-understanding of Religionswissenschaft, which exists latent before and will survive this congress. These differences in self-understanding and methodology also of our subject was evident in some of the other lectures and statements of divers quality too.

The author of this report risks to keep as a result of this congress, that the incomparabilities of the various religions qua religious self-understandings are greater than their comparabilities, because not only the questions for death or life but also the answers on it are so various that we can understand them only in their unique religious relationship.

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RAINER FLASCHE

Calgary Buddhism Conference

The Calgary Buddhism Conference aims to be a dialogue concerning the Bodhisattva doctrine as it developed in India, China, Tibet and Japan, and it will be viewed from a historical, textual and methodological perspective. The following account was written before the conference took place (September 18-21, 1978).

The conference will begin on the evening of September 18th, with an inaugural address, "The Bodhisattva Today," by Peter Slater (President of the Canadian Society for the Study of Religions and Chairman, Religious Studies Department, Carleton University). In his paper, he will analyse the religious uses of language by reference to the metaphor of religion as story.

Day two of the conference will feature three scholars who will deal with the Bodhisattva doctrine from a Historical perspective. Leading off the discussion will be Arthur L. Basham (Australian National University) with his topic, "The Evolution of the Bodhisattva Doctrine, and Its Influence in India." In his paper, he will investigate the archaeological evidence for the Theravāda concept of the Bodhisattva from Bharhut onwards and for the Mahāyāna doctrine from Gandhāra and elsewhere.

Following Basham, Turrell V. Wylie (University of Washington, Seattle) will investigate the "Influence of the Bodhisattva Doctrine on Tibetan Political History." His paper will examine the causal connection between the Bodhisattva ideal and the concept of a *reincarnate lama* and assess its influence on the course of Tibetan political history.

The third speaker, Minoru Kiyota (University of Wisconsin, Madison) will critically examine "Japan's New Religion" from the perspective of a Buddhist model for renewal. He does not take a phenomenological approach, but takes a Buddhological approach, making reference to Buddhist canonical sources, systems of thought and institutional history.

Day three of the conference will feature four scholars, who will approach the Bodhisattva doctrine from a Textual standpoint. The day will begin with Gadjin M. Nagao's (Professor Emeritus, Kyoto University) paper, "Where and How does a Bodhisattva Work?" Nagao will analyse the characteristics of a Bodhisattva and will focus his research on materials found in the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, especially Chapter XIX.

Following Nagao's presentation, Lobsang Dargyay (University of Vienna) will present his paper, "The View of Bodhicitta in Tibetan Buddhism." His main source of information will be Tsong-kha-pa's *gSer-phreng*, a commentary on Maitreya's *Abhisamayālamkāra*, which will be contrasted with Mi-pham's commentary on the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*.

The third speaker, Yun-hua Jan (Head, Religious Studies Department, McMaster University, Hamilton) will present the "Bodhisattva Doctrine in Chinese Buddhist Texts." He focuses his study on the *Shih-ti Ching* (*Daśabhūmikasūtra*), the various translations of which can be found in Chinese sources including the *Hua-yen Ching* (*Avatamsakasūtra*).

The final speaker of the day, Hisao Inagaki (University of London, England) will discuss "The Bodhisattva Doctrine as Conceived and Developed by the Founders of the New Sects in the Heian and Kamakura periods." In his paper, Inagaki focuses his attention on (1) Eisai and Dōgen, (2) Hōnen and Shinran, and (3) Nichiren, the three types of Buddhist leaders ushered in during the Kamakura period.

The fourth and last day of the conference will feature four papers. The day will begin with Narayan H. Samtani's (Chiengmai University, Thailand) paper, "Early Buddhism and the Bodhisattva Doctrine." In his paper, Samtani questions the old notions regarding the causes that led to the birth of Mahāyāna and reassesses the textual evidences in Early (Theravāda) Buddhism with regard to the origin of the Bodhisattva doctrine.

Following Samtani, H. V. Guenther (Head, Department of Far Eastern Studies, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon) will present a different perspective of the Bodhisattva doctrine in his paper, "Bodhisattva—The Ethical Man." Guenther will discuss the topic from the perspective of Tibetan *rDzogs-chen* thought, in which bodhisattva refers to an experience, not a person.

Lewis Lancaster (Chairman, Department of Oriental Languages, University of California, Berkeley) is to follow Guenther, but at the time of writing this chronicle, I have not received information on his topic.

The conference will conclude with Leslie S. Kawamura's (University of Calgary, Alberta) paper, "The Myōkōnin—Japan's Repre-

sentation of the Bodhisattva." His discussion centers around the Myōkōnin (strangely attractive people) found most frequently in the True Pure Land (Jōdoshinshū) tradition. He relates the Myōkōnin as a Bodhisattva in view of the True Pure Land Buddhism teaching that an adherent of the Nembutsu is on the same level as Maitreya.

The papers presented at the conference will be published together in a single volume with an introduction by L. S. Kawamura.

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LESLIE S. KAWAMURA

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The following conferences and colloquia (see also NUMEN XXV, p. 93-94) scheduled for late in 1978 and for 1979 have been brought to the attention of NUMEN:

The Japanese branch of CISR will hold a conference on "Religion in Japan and Secularisation" from 27-29 December, 1978. The conference will take place at International House in Tokyo.

The Eighth Annual Meeting of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations (U.S.) will be held at California State University, Northridge, on March 22-25, 1979. Papers are invited on a variety of themes; those having a particular bearing on the study of religions are:

Structural Approaches to Comparative Mythology

Literary Works as Civilizational Texts

Paradieses and Hells in Comparative Civilizational Perspective

Nature, Culture, and the Person

Utilization of Non-Western Categories in Contemporary Western Thought

Theoretical and Methodological Alternatives in the Comparative Study of Civilizations.

Those wishing to contribute papers are invited to send 3 copies of a one-page abstract by October 15, 1978, to the Chairman of the Program Committee, Prof. Edmund Leites, Dept. of Philosophy, Queens College, Flushing, N. Y. 11367.

Inquiries concerning membership in the Society should be addressed to the Secretary-Treasurer, Harry Krebs, Comparative Civilizations, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA 17013.

CISR (Congrès International de Sociologie des Religions) is holding its next congress in Venice, 26-30 August, 1979. The congress theme will be "Religion and Politics". Contact address: M. Jacques Verschueren, Secretary-General of CISR, 39 rue de la Monnaie, 59042 Lille, France.

A Regional Conference of the IAHR, devoted to "problems of methodology of the study of religions" as well as to "the social functions of religion" will be organised by the Polish member association and will take place in Warsaw early in September 1979. Further details will be announced in the next issue of NUMEN.

An International Colloquium on "The Soteriology of the Oriental Cults in the Roman Empire" will be held in Rome, September 24-28, 1979. The Colloquium, held by the Assoziazione Raffaele Pettazoni in conjunction with the Chair of the History of Religions, and co-sponsored by the IAHR, will be organised by Professors U. Bianchi and A. Bausani. Contact address: Prof. U. Bianchi, via Principe Amedeo 75, I-00185 Rome, Italy.

Z.W.